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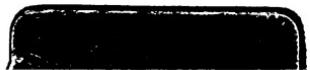
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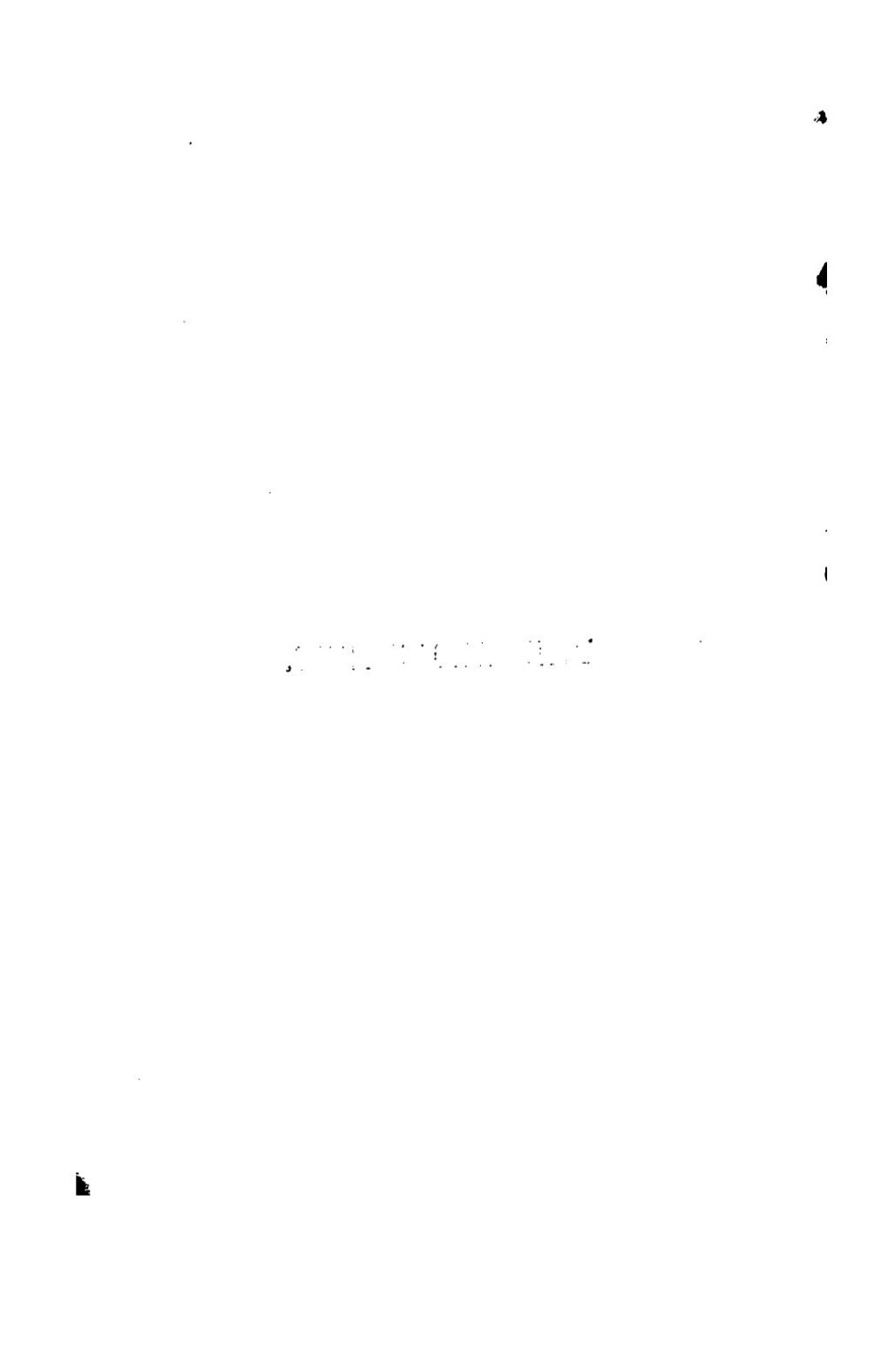
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THE ELOPEMENT.



THE ELOPEMENT:

A Tale

OF

THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

BY L. FAIRFAX.

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PREFACE.

THE disunion of the great American Republic, and the overthrow of its admirable Constitution, have naturally created a deep sensation throughout the civilized world; not more from the facts themselves, than from the almost universal doubt and ignorance prevalent in Europe regarding the peculiar political union of Sovereign States, the difference of their laws and domestic institutions, and the nature of their people. It has been the misfortune of the Southern States to be so far removed from the Old World, that their power and their character may be said to have been known almost alone through publications emanating from the press of the Northern States; the geographical position of the latter, and their direct intercourse with Europe, giving them eminent facilities for propagating their own special views of their more remote and comparatively isolated fellow-citizens. These circumstances have combined to give to the selfishness and fanaticism of the North an astonishing desire and power of increase. Their specious appeals to worldly interests and false philanthropy have gained for them applause for superior knowledge and moral attributes, whilst they were casting unmerited odium upon their brethren who could not be heard in their own defence. Not only have statistics been artfully arranged to sustain statements of their

relative superiority, but even fiction has been used as a powerful instrument for penetrating imaginative and religious minds. Indeed, fiction has been the strongest weapon of offence ; it has had a potency far beyond facts and figures, and has found its way (through the medium of translations in various languages) to the hearts of the majority of the inhabitants of Europe ; so that when the distant Southern States formally severed their political alliance with the other States of the Union, Europe had become so deeply imbued with false views of the social worth of the Confederates and the nature of their institutions, that it was a strange thing to hear a single voice in support of their cause. On the contrary, there was a loud and persistent outcry against the doctrines of Secession, and the heartiest wishes expressed for the subjugation of the South.

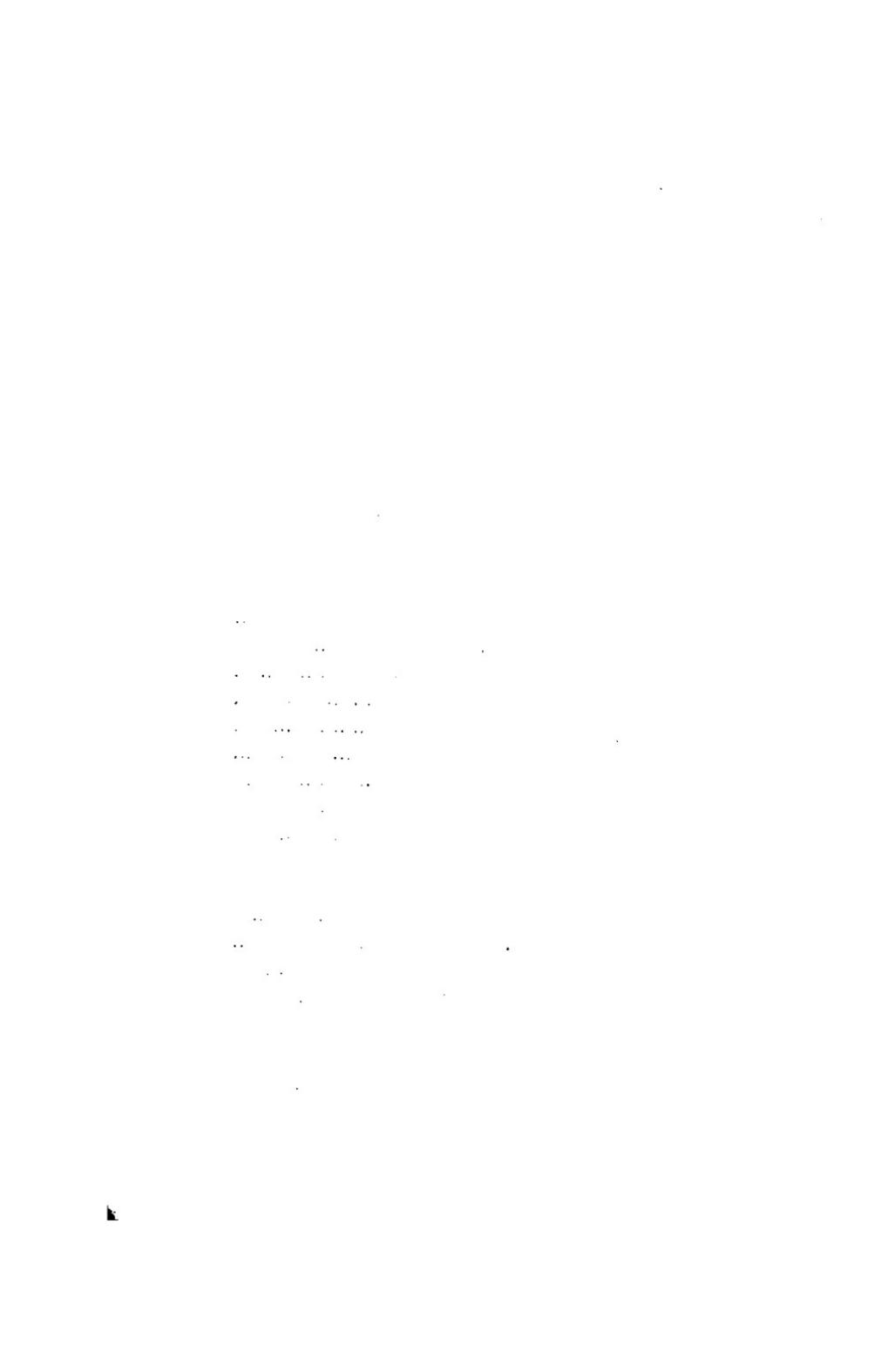
It is only after two years of the most bloody warfare between these contending States, that European nations see the injustice of their previous belief concerning a noble, brave, and Christian people, and this through the realities of war and the agency of incontrovertible facts. But there are many who have not been affected by these, yet who may be readily reached through the easier and more pleasing path of fiction.

The time has at length arrived when a tale intended to sketch one of the causes which have resulted in disastrous conflict, will be received with impartiality. The writer is conscious of labouring in an honest spirit, to overthrow fictions based upon error, by means of those having a solid foundation in the truth.

LONDON, *March, 1863.*

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CHAPTER I.

THE INN AT AUGUSTA.

IN the town of Augusta, Georgia (Confederate States), and in one of its broadest streets, there stood a little inn. This inn was the favourite resort of the planters, overseers, and shop-keepers of the neighbourhood, who found its "mint-juleps," "cock-tails," "brandy-smashers," and other cool and hot drinks common to America, very effective agents in bringing various classes together, and thus promoting business while stimulating conversation.

The tavern in question was indeed the chief rendezvous of the vicinity, but it was not the only one. In that hot climate the very streets are places for lounging gossip; and in the main thoroughfare, on this fierce summer noon, a crowd of tradesmen and their customiers are gathered in little knots under the shade of awnings, engaged in various occupations, all of them more or less characterized by that dreamy languor which seems to float in the warm air and golden sunlight of the South. In front of the several "stores," chairs, benches, barrels, and bales of cotton, offer reclining-places for the citizens, who, after driving bargains with a shrewd eye to profit, or lazily chewing or smoking, still find time to discuss the gossip of the town and the politics of the nation. Here and there, in the full blaze of the sun, lie one or two negroes, bare headed, and seeming to derive fresh life from the intense vibrating radiance which would be death to the white man.

But white and black men are alike in their adoption of a species of undress suitable to the sultry state of the weather. The very pedestrians are clad in the lightest

of blouses, and the shopmen rejoice in the entire absence of coats and waistcoats, whilst their embroidered shirt bosoms are set off by braces of the gaudiest colours.

Augusta is a true American town, and moreover a true town of the South. It has its superfluity of cheap photographers, its quota of dentists, its patientless doctors, its briefless lawyers, its legion of generals, colonels, captains, and other military leaders reared among the plantations. It has its school-houses and its churches, and it has its prejudices too; foremost amongst which is a dislike to the overseer, particularly if he be a Yankee, as men from the New England States are called.

See! here is one of them advancing to the inn door, riding with an air of coarse arrogance on a brown mare, in the very guidance of which, with that sudden, fierce, and capricious application of the whip at unexpected moments, he seems to suggest the brutal tyranny where-with he rules the negroes committed to his charge. As he dismounts and ties his beast to a post, it is easily seen that he is a tall man; while his contracted brows, deep-set eyes, livid skin, singularly large cruel mouth, and reckless expression (the combined result of drink and of original disposition), discover him to be a person of savage and unbending will, with a preponderance of the animal passions.

The shop-keepers and their customers recognise him, but it is that sort of recognition which prefers silence to salutation: a bow nipped in the bud, one might call it. The few negroes who are half-awake seem to feel, without looking at him, that he is near them, and jump up hastily, as if to avoid a blow or a kick. But his present purpose is not with them; for he passes under the verandah which surrounds the hostelry, and enters the bar. He has favoured the tradesmen outside with a scowling smile, meant to be a civil return to their salutations; but the gentlemen chatting in the cool air of the verandah, as they poise themselves deftly on the back legs of their chairs, are

of a higher class, and no notice is taken by them of the overseer. They are for the most part well-to-do land-owners, members of Congress, or gentlemen ambitious of a seat there; and at this leisure moment they are mentally composing "bunkum" speeches to their friends and constituents, and rounding off the periods in the light smoke of a cigar.

. Swagging into the bar, the overseer called for a glass of brandy-and-water, which liquid, having the accommodating property of imparting coolness in summer and warmth in winter, is at all times a favourite beverage. While serving him with this, the barman inquired if he had come to take the little girl away, adding, "Mrs. Lane told me to tell you that she don't want to part with her yet awhile."

"Take her away!" ejaculated the overseer, muttering an oath; "I should think not! She may keep the brat for ever, or throw it into the Green Pond, for all I care."

He moodily cogitated as he drank the brandy-and-water with which he had been supplied, and then said,—

"Send the little wretch into the sitting-room, will you? I've a word or two to say."

The barman sent a negro to discharge this errand, and the overseer shortly afterwards ascended the winding staircase leading to the upper floors, and entered the drawing-rooms. Here he was soon joined by a negress bearing in her arms a pale, delicate little girl, about six years of age, with soft, languid, hazel eyes, and curling brown hair. The face would immediately have attracted attention by its sweet and fragile beauty. It had one characteristic which not only arrested the eye, but fixed the mind with a feeling of painful wonder. In the midst of all that tender, infantine grace and freshness—that bright, clear dawning of a human life—hung, like an ever-present shadow, undefined in any feature, yet felt in all, an aspect of startled anxiety, of suffering apprehension. You could not say it was in the eyes or in the mouth. When you

attempted to fix it in any one line of the face, it glided into nothing: if you tried to refer it to manner or action, it eluded your power of analysis. But turn away your eyes for a moment, and then again direct them to the small childish visage in its entirety, and out started the same sad look, intangible, yet predominant over all. It was an expression such as we sometimes see in the faces of middle-aged men and women who have gone through much trouble, and bending beneath its weight, have learned to fear more than to hope: a sorrowful look in all faces, but in a child's features, tragical.

"Now, you brat, come here!" cried the overseer, snatching the girl from the arms of the nurse.

The little creature, however, clung to the woman's dress, crying in a frightened voice,—

"Mammie, Mammie, I don't want to go with him. Don't let him take me away; please don't, Mammie dear."

"You don't like me, don't you, you little cuss?" roared the man, with a savage light in his small, fierce eyes. "I'll larn you better, I will!" and he dealt the child a blow on the ear which sent her reeling against Mammie, who quickly caught her up, and folded her in her arms.

"Don't cry, honey dear," said the kind-hearted negress, fondling the poor infant, and rocking her to and fro to ease the pain. "He's a white brute bear to treaf his own chile so."

"You lie, you black wretch!" retorted the overseer. "Not a drop of *my* blood runs in her veins. Give her to me, and I'll take her home and trounce her for this."

"You sha'n't, massa Scottah nuther—not while *I*se yar," exclaimed the black woman, firing at the man's brutality; and she ran to the foot of the staircase, screaming out, "Miss Belle, Miss Belle, come down yar, please, Miss Belle!"

In another minute the lady entered the drawing-room. She was not more than thirty years of age. Her features

were handsome, her complexion and hair dark, whilst her figure was tall and well made; so that she presented a fair type of a Southern woman in her prime. This was Mrs. Lane, the wife of the inn-keeper, though still called "Miss Belle," by Mammie, who had been her servant before marriage, and who could not get rid of old associations.

"See yar! Miss Belle," cried the negress, with the volatility of her race. "Yar's massa Scottah alayin' on pore Mandy agin, an' am gwine to tuk her hum to gub her some moo."

"Really, Mr. Scotter," said the lady, soothing the crying child, "I can't think what spite you can have against this poor little creature, your own flesh and blood——"

"Madam," interrupted Scotter, "I've sworn a hundred times that the brat is none o' mine. You *make* me hate her, by always sticking her off as *my* child. Mine, indeed! when she's always running away from me, as she did just now! The yaller gal, her mother, was mine, but that's another matter. As for this imp——"

"You make me shudder to hear you," interposed Mrs. Lane. "Be the child what she may, white or black, she is entitled to some humanity."

"Look here," said Scotter, becoming argumentative. "There ain't no law to force me to treat her with what you call humanity, and I'll be dog'ond if I do. But for Lane's interference, I'd 'a' sold her long ago, or put her into the fields to pick cotton with the rest o' the niggers."

"Rather let her remain with Mammie, with whom she does well, and begins to pick up. It's a sad life for a little child to lead, living in that great, lonely house on Squire's plantation, and you out all day," said Mrs. Lane kindly.

"No," replied Scotter roughly; "she's got to go or she's got to stay, one or the other. She's no good, no how. She's nothing but an eyesore to me: she whines so, that I have to lick her to make her shut up. Even the yaller gal, her mother, was better, 'cause she was a *woman*, and could turn her hand to most anythink. But I'll tell you what: if you'll

get me quit of the child—if you'll take her out an' out—you may have her, and good riddance to bad rubbish: if not—come along, you miss."

On concluding this speech, Scotter grasped the child's arms so rudely that she shrieked with pain, crying, "Mammie, Mammie, hold me tight! Don't let me go with father—with him, I mean."

"You'd better not call me father, or I'll break your head. You're none o' mine; *I'm white, I am.*"

"Mr. Scotter," said Mrs. Lane quietly, "the girl shall remain at the inn since you are willing. But whilst she is with me I shall brook no interference from you. Of course *I* cannot adopt her, since you insist that she is the offspring of a mulatto girl."

"To be sure she is, and no mistake."

"She bears no evidence of negro blood in her features, or in the tone of her voice. When you came to Augusta, she must have been about two years old," remarked the lady musingly.

"Yes, she was, thereabouts," replied Scotter.

"And her mother," she continued, "had died of fever at New Orleans, just before you came here, I have been told."

"Yes; but what's this to do with your taking her?"

"A great deal. One day she will want to know who her parents were."

"She'll have a mighty hard time to find out, then," replied Scotter, with a coarse laugh. "I disown her, and the yaller gal's dead. She is not *my* child, Mrs. Lane, or I wouldn't part with her, although she *is* a gal. If she had been a boy, we'd 'a' got on better: a boy would 'a' gone with me over the plantation, and wouldn't 'a' minded a kick or two, now and then. But a gal, fah! A boy you shouldn't 'a' had, but seein' it's only a gal that's allers in my way, you may keep her, and I'm glad to get quit of her."

The happy expression which the child's face assumed at this decision, indicated that the satisfaction was mutual.

"Very well. Mammie, take her below, and see that you treat her well," said Mrs. Lane.

"Bress de sugar-stick, dat I will; she's Mammie's gal now."

The hitherto stern, broad face of the negress relaxed into a smile, which increased to such a hearty laugh that it shook her head until she seemed within an ace of self-decapitation.

"Mr. Scotter," said Mrs. Lane, as Mammie with the child left the room, "I most earnestly trust that you will keep away from Amanda. She is evidently very much afraid of you; and what need to annoy, after you have given her up? I will see that she is well treated, and shall myself teach her her letters, as it is time she knew them."

"Teach her what you like, so that you don't teach her that I'm her father, the pale-faced piccaninny. Good morning to you."

Scotter, with an attempt at a bow, took his leave, descended the stairs, stopped at the bar, demanded "a stiff glass of brandy," poured it down his amiable throat, crushed his wide-awake over his eyes, mounted the mare, and cantered away; giving the men on the pavement an opportunity of changing their conversation on cotton and politics to a summary of the overseer's demerits.

"A nice, hard-working, hard-drinking chap, that Scotter," said one.

Another remarked, "They say he's awful cruel to that little child that lives with him."

"I wonder Squire keeps such a fellow on the place," said another.

"He wouldn't if he knew what goes on; but he's always abroad, and a man can't be in two places, you know."

While these and similar remarks were being made, Mrs. Lane sent for the child, who returned with Mammie.

The girl had a manner of retreating when addressed, winking her eyelids rapidly as if anticipating a blow. Mrs. Lane, kindly taking her on her lap, said,—

"Do you remember your mother, Amanda?"

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She made no reply.

"Think now; try to remember. Did you ever see a lady with Mr. Scotter, living in the same house with him?"

"No, only him," she answered.

"And was he never kind to you? Did he never kiss you as Mammie does?" asked the lady.

"No," said Amanda, "but he hits me though, *so hard*."

"Often?"

"In the mornings when he gets on the horse, and in the evenings when he comes back. He never hits me when he's away."

"Of course not. But are you quite sure that you do not remember your mother, nor where you lived before you came here?"

"Yes, quite sure," replied Amanda.

"Mammie," said Mrs. Lane, "see that you check the negroes when they call this child the 'white nigger.' We have only Scotter's word that she is so, and we must give her the benefit of any doubt which exists in regard to her origin."

"Sartingly, Miss Belle; but does yo tink dat massa Scottah's her fadder?" inquired Mammie.

"I do not. You yourself heard him deny it most positively. Keep her in the open air as much as possible until she becomes quite strong. And be sure that the servants do not acquire a habit of calling her the 'white nigger,' which they have already done too often."

After Mammie had taken Amanda away, Mrs. Lane sat thoughtfully swaying backwards and forwards in a rocking-chair. She was reflecting upon the new charge thus suddenly thrust upon her.

Mrs. Lane had descended from one of the best families in Georgia. When quite young, she formed an attachment to a gentleman whose parentage was equal to her own; but being a spendthrift, with a strong inclination for that drink which inebriates much more than it cheers, her father discountenanced her lover's suit.

In a moment of weakness, she consented to elope with him ; after which secret and disobedient act, her father closed his doors upon them. Lane, having run through his fortune, knew not how to provide for his youthful wife.

At length, after much privation, and remorse for the misery which he had brought upon her, he overcame his pride, and gladly accepted the management of the inn, which a friend, the owner, offered him.

He now determined to amend the follies of his youth ; and through sobriety, perseverance, and integrity, eventually became the owner of the inn, the negroes, and a small plantation.

Mrs. Lane, possessing a cultivated mind, held a good position in American society, where social distinctions are not so rigidly adhered to as in aristocratic countries.

She was deeply interested in the elevation of the slaves, teaching her own house-servants to read, and encouraging them in that piety which seems a part of their nature.

Her warmest sympathies had been aroused in little Amanda's case : hence came her proposal to take the child, ere the loneliness of its situation, the brutality of Scotter, and the serious doubt as to the purity of her blood, should combine to change the loving nature and gentle temper of this poor orphan girl.

CHAPTER II.

AMANDA LEARNS HER PRAYERS.

How the little inn was kept in such good order was a mystery to all but Mammie. Mr. Lane passed his time more like an English gentleman-farmer than as the landlord of a tavern—riding, driving, boating, shooting, and fishing—while Mrs. Lane played the Lady Bountiful to the country round.

The inn and its buildings occupied three sides of a large open square: on the fourth ran a sluggish stream of water, called the Green Pond, over which were thrown a few frail bridges.

The negroes did as little as possible. In the morning they made a pretence of being very busy; but as there were a great number attached to the household, there was not enough work to keep them all employed.

At two o'clock some waited at dinner, whilst others pulled the ropes of enormous fans, suspended from the ceiling, to drive off flies, and cool those who sat at *table d'hôte*; but after this *laborious* ceremony, all indications of industry would cease, and the slaves betake themselves to the courtyard, there to fall asleep on the benches ranged about, fast asleep in the presence of that unveiled Southern sun which seems essential to their nature.

The swarthy negroes thus wrapped in heavy sleep, suggested a caricature of the dreamers in that famous fairy castle where all were doomed to slumber a hundred years; but in the case of these blacks, the bell for supper was the good genius who came to awaken the spell-bound; at which

magical sound they started up with an alacrity quite incompatible with the deep sleep of the previous moment.

Towards ten o'clock at night they again sought the court-yard, at liberty to do as they pleased. They then brought forth old banjoes and bones to accompany themselves in songs of a pious character. The words and music of their melodies were usually improvised, and what they lacked in originality and variety of diction was made up in sweetness of tone and unfailing harmony.

For Amanda these simple ditties had an indescribable charm. Sitting at the window of her little bed-room, she listened with rapture to the voices blending with the bland Southern air.

She was happy! With the easy forgetfulness of childhood, she had ceased to think of Scotter, who came no longer to the inn.

Every bright sunny morning, Amanda stole away to the hay-loft, and there sat upon the new-mown hay; then varied this amusement by jumping from the large opening in the upper floor on to the soft hill of hay in the lower one. Then she climbed the ladder outside, and into the upper loft again, and repeated the jumping until quite weary. Then off she ran to frighten the hens out of their propriety, and bear away the new-laid eggs to Mammie for breakfast.

But the little girl's greatest delight was to seek the Green Pond, which was, however, more of a creek than a pond. On either bank a plank was bedded edgewise, about two feet from the water, and over this low fence she sprang backwards and forwards for an hour at a time, deriving great pleasure from the excitement of venturing so near the stream without falling in.

Tiring of this, she would throw herself on one of the bridges (composed of a single board), and gaze upon the reflection of her long hair and fair features in the water, wondering why her face was so much whiter than the slaves'. It was indeed a peculiarity. Looking at her hazel eyes,

soft, straight brown hair, no one would readily suppose her to be of black blood.

Guests at the inn would stop, pat her head, and admire her beauty, inquiring whose child she was. Upon which some negro would dart forward, saying,—

“Dun know whose child she am. She am a *white* nigger.”

“How strange!” they would say: “I should not have suspected it from her appearance. Her skin is fair, nose small, mouth delicate.”

Constantly hearing such expressions as these while associating with Mammie and the other negresses, the child grew in the conviction that she was really a *white negress*.

“Maria,” she once said to a yellow girl, “why do they always notice *me* at the inn, and why do you call me the white nigger?”

“Case you *is* a white nigger, an’ no mistake, chile, an’ we don’t have such rale white ones often; they is mostly more yaller nor white,” replied Maria.

“Is my face as white as Mrs. Lane’s, then, and not yellow like yours?”

“Go ‘long, chile! Uf yo skin *am* as white as missus’, dat wont nebber make you nuffin but a nigger. Go ‘long, chile! yo don’t b’long to dis prop’ty, less massa boot yo o’ dat ole Scottah; an’ he aint done dat, *I* guess, case yo aint wuf five dollar, no how, nigger.”

After Amanda had been resigned by Scottah to the keeping of Mrs. Lane, Mammie took her under her especial charge. One night they went together into a small bedroom which was seldom used, but on that occasion it was to be made ready for a lodger. It was dedicated to Mr. Lane’s cast-off apparel; and on a long row of pegs hung numerous hats, coats, and trousers, which even in their faded, solitary disuse, bore a strong resemblance to that good man’s form.

Amanda soon began to pry into the pockets, and at length drew from one a small book. She ran with it to Mammie, crying,—

“What’s this, Mammie—what’s this?”

"It's a book," replied the good woman.

"A book! what's it for?"

"To read frum, chile."

"To read from! what's that?"

"Well, chile," replied the negress, rather puzzled, "to read—is—to read—dat's all I knows 'bout it. Lem me see what dis book is. Oh, it's a Bible. *I* can read *this* book, an' no mistake!"

"What's in a Bible, Mammie? and what do all these marks mean?"

"Why, dey tell yo all 'bout God."

"God!" echoed Amanda: "who's that?"

"Laws-a-massy!" cried Mammie, raising her hands and eyes with an expression of the deepest horror: "to t'ink dat Scottah raised dis ar chile in sech enurance, dat she don know nuffin 'bout *Him*! Oh, massa Scottah! de debbel's kindlin' up a roastin' fire for yoo. I shall nebber forgub mysef dat Ise larned de gal nuffin. De Lord hab massy on dis nigger's sins! Does yo know yo pra'rs, chile?"

"No, Mammie," replied Amanda, wondering what she meant.

"Den jes kneel down yar quick under dem ole cloaks, an' say what I say. 'Our Father who art in hebb'en'—"

"Have *I* a father, Mammie—*where?*" cried the child, passionately interrupting her.

"Yes, chile; he's up dere, whar de moon am risin'. God made de moon."

"Scottah is not my father, then?"

"Hush, honey, and say yo pra'rs. God made de stars, an' de sun, an' ebery t'ing. He made hissef an' yo."

"Why, Mammie—why did he do that?"

"Case he wants some angels from dis wurl, an' uf we is good down yar, when we dies we turns into angels, an' go to lib up dar wid him!"

"But do *all* people turn into angels, Mammie—Scottah too?"

"No, pore chile. Some is bad, like Scottah; but good,

niggers wont meet *him* in hebben, no how : dey wouldn't spoke to him uf dey seed him."

The moon had now risen in all her luminous majesty, silvering the fair face of the child as, kneeling, she gazed upon the earnest countenance of the black woman, seeking to instil into that youthful mind the principles of truth.

"In dis wurl, honey," she continued, "we has pain, privation, an' temptation. We is wicked, dat like our sufferin' Saviour, we may purify oursefs, an' turn into angels of glory up dar."

"Oh, Mammie, how lovely it is! let us go there now," said the child, eagerly grasping her hand.

"No, honey, we can't go dar till we dies."

"What does that word mean, Mammie?"

"Why, de body don't mobe no longer: it's put into the groun' an' rots. Does yor understan', honey?"

"I think I do," she answered. "When old black George died, and was so stiff, and had coppers on his eyes, and couldn't walk nor speak, and felt so cold, Scotter said, 'I'm glad that old scoundrel's dead.' I wondered why they put him in the ground, and you told me it was because he was a good man and had gone to heaven."

"But yo don't go to hebben uf yo not good," said Mammie.

"What becomes of me, then?"

"I dun know; onny dat we're not 'lowed to be happy in de nex' wurl uf we is bad in dis. Yo is a little critter now, but when yo gets to be a womurn, yo will hab nuf trouble."

"Oh, I am so sorry!" exclaimed Amanda: "I thought when I was a woman I should have no more trouble."

"An' when yo is in trouble, yo must remember de Lord's Pra'r, and say it to him, an' he will help yo."

"Are you quite sure of that, Mammie?" she asked earnestly.

"Quite sho', honey. He allers listens to de black as well as to de white; an' when de good nigger die, he go to

hebben, and den de black skin peel off, an' he am *white* angel."

"Then you will not be a nigger in the other world, Mammie dear. Are you glad?"

"Ise not sorry Ise a nigger, chile, case *He* made me so. But begin once moo. 'Our Father who art in hebben' ____"

"Oh, Mammie," cried the child, with a passionate burst of tears, "do you mean that *my* father is up there in the moon, and that's why I never see him?"

"Chile," answered the negress solemnly, "God am a Father to us all, and hallowed be his name!"

Then the girl repeated the prayer many times; and each succeeding night Mammie, in her rude but feeling manner, taught her the meaning of the Divine word. And thus in Amanda's mind were early sown the seeds of forbearance, patience, and implicit belief in the justice of every act of His.

CHAPTER III.

THE JEWELLERY PEDLER.

YEARS elapsed, and in that time Mrs. Lane had taught Amanda to read and to write, and soon discovered that she was gifted with no ordinary intelligence. She therefore sought to elevate the tone of her mind, and when she grew older, gave her celebrated authors to read, and conversed with her upon them.

Thus instructing her day by day, the lady naturally became fond of the child of her adoption, and quite forgot that between them there existed a difference in blood as well as in station; for in Amanda's face there was nothing to remind Mrs. Lane of her origin. Her *protégée* was now entering her sixteenth year. She was of average height; her form slight and graceful. Her features were almost classically straight; her face oval, beaming with the sweet innocence of girlhood. The look of anxiety, once so painful an expression of her features, had been banished thence by Mrs. Lane's kindness. In disposition Amanda was unsuspecting and patient; she was guileless, reverent, and exceedingly tractable. Indeed, this latter trait predominated over all others, and at times amounted to weakness. Her confidence was easily obtained, and her feelings worked upon. Of a naturally sensitive and delicate mind, Amanda had been rendered unfit to depend upon her own judgment by relying entirely on Mrs. Lane's.

Amanda's principal occupation was to read to her benefactress. They sewed, conversed, walked or drove together. Had she remained with Scatter, how different might her life have been! Owing to Mrs. Lane, she had been raised

from the position of a menial (for such she would have been with him), and made the companion—nay, the friend—of a lady. Had she been Mrs. Lane's daughter, her duties could not have been fewer or her comforts greater. With advantages such as these she should have been entirely happy; but she was not quite so. A shadow, small at first, but increasing slowly, hung over her, and gradually undermined the sources of contentment. It was the doubt *regarding her parentage*. She might have forgotten what she was but for the name of the "*white nigger*," which the slaves, notwithstanding Mrs. Lane's prohibition, continued to call her; not when speaking to her, but of her. And Amanda, knowing this, felt wounded to the soul that she could not refute the imputation.

Mrs. Lane was not aware how greatly this preyed upon Amanda's mind; but seeing her unusually reflective one day, she suggested that they should pay a visit to the show-room of a jewellery pedler, who was then staying at the inn.

The jewellery pedler is invariably a Yankee, who travels from one town to another to sell cheap trinkets. He lodges at the best hotels, and sells a great deal to the maid-servants, who sometimes save a year's wages to expend in tawdry finery. Even the visitors at the hotels buy of the jewellery pedler; so that his stock is soon exhausted. Abolition agents from the North, when in the South, often avail themselves of the pedler's disguise, as it enables them to come in close communication with the slaves; and by wrapping the little trinkets in seditious tracts calculated to inflame the man against the master, they disseminate their views; for the love of dress and show predominates with the negro, and where the jewellery pedler is there will he go.

Mrs. Lane and Amanda went to the pedler's room, and on knocking, were requested to enter. Opening the door, they saw a man standing by the side of a bed, taking small jewels out of fine paper wrappings, and tastefully spreading them on the counterpane.

Gold (?) chains were hanging over chair-backs ; brooches, rings, bracelets, and watches bedecked the washing-stand, table, and other articles of furniture.

The owner of these costly treasures was a thin man, six feet in height, and decidedly lanky. His features were so far from handsome, that but for an indescribable sweetness of expression, they would have been repulsive. The cheek-bones were high ; the mouth large and coarse, but firm ; the hair not particularly unlike hay in texture and colour.

A fine blue eye, however, redeemed the ugliness of the whole face. His voice, too, was melodious. He was dressed in a suit of black, which an observant person would have said had seen better days. There was a certain ease and grace in his movements, which made one lose sight of the ungainliness of his form, and induced a belief that, like his costume, he had experienced more prosperous fortunes. Evidently he had not always been a pedler.

He had registered his name on the books of the hotel as "Doctor George Jed."

"Good morning, ladies," he said, with an irreproachable bow, as Mrs. Lane and Amanda appeared. "Come in, come in. Excuse my not having my traps in order ;" waving a pair of snowy, well-formed hands over the glittering counterpane, to display the former, and to call attention to the jewels spread over the latter.

"Have you any pretty rings or brooches, suitable for a young girl ?" inquired Mrs. Lane.

Jed raised his eyes to the countenance of Amanda. It was a momentary look, but one in which a physiognomist might have read surprise and admiration.

"Blue would become her," he replied, holding up a little heart-shaped lump of gold, in which blue stones were set, much in the manner that currants are put into a pudding.

"Well," remarked Mrs. Lane, with charming frankness, "I think I never saw anything uglier than that in my life."

"Very true, madam," replied Jed. "The fact is, I've nothing to suit a lady of refined taste. My goods were pur-

chased merely to please the lower classes, not anticipating a visit from a person like yourself. Really I've nothing fit to show you."

"Oh, no doubt I shall find something that will do for a keepsake merely," replied Mrs. Lane. "Amanda won't mind, so long as it comes from me."

The girl turned a look of loving gratitude upon her benefactress, who took her hand. Jed's eyes flashed forth another glance of admiration upon Amanda.

"There's nothing in the stock," he said, "worth anything. I'm a man of conscience, and I do not desire you to buy anything which you might not afterwards be pleased with. But as you wish this young lady to wear a token of regard from you—I can't take any money for anything I've got here, but I shall consider that you wish to encourage me in an honest calling, if you will allow her to accept any of these trinkets."

"I can't think of such a thing," replied Mrs. Lane, in an offended tone.

"Understand me, madam," returned Jed quickly: "not for the world would I take such a liberty as to offer this young lady a present. No, madam; I merely wished that, with *your* permission, she should wear a brooch or bracelet until I can go to New York, and return with a better stock of goods."

"Oh, in that case, Amanda, you may select something to be exchanged when he visits us again."

The girl put upon her finger a little ring with a cross upon it. Mrs. Lane insisted on giving him its value, which he reluctantly accepted.

"What a strange man!" said Mrs. Lane to Amanda when they left the room; "not like a common pedler. Such manners and address! So liberal, too! He is evidently some reduced gentleman, who does not know how to take care of his own interests, or he would never have thought of pressing his wares upon us without payment."

Good, unsuspecting lady! Unfortunate speech! The

imaginative Amanda took an interest in him immediately. "Reduced gentleman!" she repeated to herself, sighing. "Poor fellow! how generous, too!"

As the door closed upon the ladies, Jed stood, with folded arms, in deep meditation.

"Who can they be?" he asked himself. "I've seen many a lovely face before, but never one that struck my fancy so. So young, evidently little more than a girl. So arch, so graceful, tender! What a look she gave that lady! It went straight to my heart; the first time, I think, I ever felt anything *there*. She's the daughter of the elder lady, I guess.—Pshaw! I'll not think any more of her. I've not come down South on the business I have, to spoil it all by falling in love. That would be a new idea for me."

And, as if determined to distract his mind, he resumed the occupation which the ladies had interrupted, arranging the jewels on the bed. He took up a chain, and put it down again mechanically; then thrust his hands in his pockets, and began to whistle an air, but it died away gradually as if he had forgotten what it was. Then, with a start, he gathered up all the trinkets from the bed, and swept them in confusion into a box within reach.

"It's of no use," he thought, "to go on with this game, until I find out all about that girl."

He then went out, locking his door, and descended to the bar-room, and approaching the counter, he asked for "something to drink."

"A gin-sling or a cock-tail?" inquired the barman.

"A glass of lemonade: I never take anything stronger."

"I rayther guess you're about the onny one of *that* kind in our town, then," said the man.

"Yes," replied Jed, pretending to misunderstand the remark; "you are quite right, it *is* a fine town. I've never seen a likelier one, and I've travelled a few, I reckon. And you have here very fine women, too, and no mistake."

"I rayther guess we have *some*," replied the barman,

with the proud air of one to whom the whole merit belonged.

"This hotel isn't slow in that line, is it?" asked Jed. "I saw some first-class ladies here just now, and dressed first-class too."

"Who were they?" inquired the barman.

"I can't think of their names just now. One was a middle-aged lady; the other, a glorious girl about fifteen, with lustrous hazel eyes and brown hair."

"I shouldn't wonder," said the barman, "if you meant Mrs. Lane and Mandy."

"Yes, I do, just," replied Jed, who remembered that the lady had addressed the girl as Amanda. "Mother and daughter," he continued with such a dubious expression of face and tone that his listener was at a loss to conjecture whether Jed had made a discovery to that effect, or merely supposed them to be mother and daughter. However, they both seemed to consider it a good joke, as they laughed heartily.

"But," said the barman, "you'd better not let the boss hear you say that, as Mrs. Lane's his wife, and that gal's a white nigger."

"A nigger!" repeated Jed, in the utmost astonishment—"why, you don't say so?"

"Yes, I do, though."

"She's as white as I am. Who's child is she, and who does she belong to?"

"I don't 'xactly know," replied the man. "She always lives here, but Mrs. Lane don't own her. They say she's Scotter's daughter, with a dab of the tar-brush."

This innuendo, intended to convey the idea that Amanda was not altogether white, was much enjoyed by the men, who, by a certain accent peculiar to the Eastern States of America, had discovered, to their mutual satisfaction, that they were both Yankees, and naturally relished everything which threw discredit on the Southerners.

In the course of conversation with the barman, Jed

learned all the particulars of the popular story in regard to Amanda's origin. He then returned to his bed-room, where he indulged in a short reverie, which ended in his taking up an imitation diamond ring, and descending with it to the drawing-room. There he seated himself near the door facing the staircase.

There was nothing peculiar in the staircase to call for a lengthy inspection from any one; nevertheless, Jed watched it as if he feared that, like Aladdin's palace, it might fly off in the air, notwithstanding he was self-deputed to guard it. Negroes crept up the stairs, bearing jugs filled with iced water, and returned with empty ones. At length Amanda appeared.

"Ah!" cried Jed, springing towards her, "I've been waiting to see you."

"Indeed!" she exclaimed, with a look of surprise.

"Yes. I've something to tell you; but you must promise not to tell any one."

"I'm averse to giving a promise," she replied; "and I've not sought to know this secret."

"Then I shall confide it to you, and leave it to your honour not to reveal it. I'm not a pedler; I'm a gentleman."

"Oh, if that's all," said Amanda, smiling, "I shall not mention it. But why represent yourself as a pedler when you are not? That is not right."

"I will tell you my reasons another time," he replied. "I have been looking over my stock since you saw it, and have found this little diamond ring. See how it sparkles! Turn it to the light and shake it." Amanda took, looked at it, and returned it. "What splendid diamonds they are, to be sure," he continued. "Will you exchange this ring for the one you selected?"

"No, I thank you. I like this well enough," she said, turning to leave him.

"Stop a moment. Have you ever been in New York?"

"Never. Why do you ask?"

"Because it's such a charming place that every one ought to see it once in a lifetime. *I like it: it's so free from prejudice.*"

These words constrained Amanda to listen to Jed, in spite of a conviction that she was not prudent to converse with one of whom she knew so little.

"Free from prejudice," she asked herself—"what can that mean?"

"*There,*" he continued, as if in answer to her thought, "everybody moves in the best circles. Even colour makes no difference *there*, and the blacks can always obtain a livelihood by their own exertions. Here there is a prejudice against colour." Amanda blushed, and turned to leave him. "Stay," he said, taking her by the arm and drawing her into one of the less frequented passages: "we shall not be observed here, and I have something of the utmost importance to confide to you."

Amanda, alarmed by his looks and manner, again sought to escape him; but he still held her arm tightly, and in a tone of command said,—

"You *must* hear me: it is for *your* good that I speak. I know your secret, Amanda. I know more: I know who is your *master*."

She trembled, and faltered out,—

"You mistake: I have no master."

"You think so; but I know that you belong to Scotter."

"It may be so," she replied, summoning courage; "and what then?"

"You are liable to be sold by him at any moment."

"Impossible. He would not dare——"

"But he will dare, and shortly too."

"I cannot believe it. If I really am the property of Mr. Scotter, why did he not sell me long ago?"

"Because as a child you were comparatively worthless; but as a woman, young, lovely, and——"

"Silence!" she answered with dignity. "If what you

say be true—if he have the power to sell me——” She paused.

“ Well ? ”

“ I thank you for the hint which you have given me ; though how you obtained information in regard to Scotter’s intentions towards me, I am at a loss to think.”

“ I will give you my authority and proofs another time. In the interim, let me urge you, as you value your *home* and liberty, to remember what I say.”

Jed’s manner was impressive, and carried conviction to the simple mind of Amanda. Thoroughly alarmed, she exclaimed,—

“ I will go at once to Mrs. Lane, and telling her what you say, entreat her to buy me.”

“ That you must *not* do,” he answered imperatively.

“ And why not ? ” she asked, surprised. “ I have no secrets from her, particularly with a stranger.”

“ I shall not be so long, for what I have learned of your past will interweave your future destiny with mine.”

Jed gazed full upon the astonished features of the girl, his eyes glowing with strange prophetic fire.

“ Your destiny and mine ! ” she murmured, dropping her eyes—“ what can they have in common ? ”

“ This : I will save you from the doom hanging over you ; I will save you from Scotter.”

“ Thanks ; but Mrs. Lane will do that as soon as I have told her what you say.”

“ Confide to Mrs. Lane your fears,” said Jed, with seeming frankness, “ but do not repeat that your information comes from me.”

“ Why not ? ”

“ Because, should Mrs. Lane fail in purchasing you, I am the only person who can give you freedom.”

“ You talk in enigmas, and were it not a grave subject, I should think you were jesting.”

“ Let the suggestion that Mrs. Lane should treat with

Scotter come from you, but conceal from her this interview."

"You ask of me to practise deception, and I am unskilled in that. She will see my embarrassment, and——"

"Promise not to tell her until after she has seen Scotter; then you may do as you please."

Amanda reflected, "It is but a temporary concealment; what matters it if I tell her afterwards?"

"Do you give your promise?"

"Yes, if after a while you will release me from it."

"Lose no time, for events will speedily occur to prove to you the danger in which you stand." So saying, Jed abruptly left her.

"Strange!" she said to herself. "*His* destiny and *mine!* Scotter about to sell me! I will not believe it yet."

Slowly, thoughtfully, she sought the solitude of her own room, there to muse on what had transpired, and if possible solve the manner in which Jed became acquainted with her history. His crafty insinuations took deep root in her heart, and re-awakened the smouldering desire to know who and what she was to Scotter, and if it were indeed in his power to take her from her home and benefactress, and send her on the world the property of a stranger. So greatly had this interview disturbed the serenity of her mind, that she feared she could never calm herself sufficiently to conceal her emotion from Mrs. Lane.

Jed was as much agitated as Amanda, but from a different cause. It was his ardent wish to entice her from her home. For at first sight of her he experienced a feeling which he called love, and which at least had the merit of being sincere. He was a man accustomed to the business of urging and assisting slaves to escape. The arguments he used differed little in any case. He usually affected to have obtained information that the master was on the point of selling them; and impelled by their own fears of what they might suffer by the

change, and allured by promises of protection and an idle life in the North, he led them to their ruin. He was an agent of a certain secret abolition society formed in the North, and by it was provided with ample means to sow broadcast the seeds of discontent among the Southern negroes. He was given to gaming for the further increase of his income. But during the time he had been employed by the society, he had never met a case in which his heart warmed as it did in Amanda's.

Was it really love, unselfish love for her, that made him resolve to destroy her happiness in her home?

CHAPTER IV.

“SHE NIBBLES.”

THE barman having committed some petty crime in his own state, took up his residence in the South, and eventually entered the service of Mrs. Lane. But though unable to return to his country, he still preferred it above all others ; and although finding a refuge and a livelihood among the Southerners, who were ignorant of his antecedents, he “hated them with a hate known only” to abolitionists. He was therefore readily induced by Jed to aid him in enticing away the young companion of his mistress.

And now the anxiety of Amanda’s life began.

Observing that a change had taken place in the girl, that her former joyousness had been displaced by silence, and that a look of disquiet had settled itself in her face, Mrs. Lane inquired the cause.

“I have been intending to tell you,” replied Amanda, “but my resolution has always failed, and I have put it off in the hope that my fears would prove unfounded.”

“What fears ?”

“That Scotter would sell me.”

“That Scotter would sell you ?” echoed Mrs. Lane. “That is a very strange idea ! Have you just thought of it ?”

“No, dear Mrs. Lane. I have thought more of it lately ; even as a child I pondered on it, and my young life was embittered by the conflict in my mind. A thousand times I have asked myself, ‘Is Scotter my father ?’ and

I could not stifle the conviction, that if he were, he has been cruel and unnatural not to acknowledge me. But he left me to your bounty, and a father should not so desert his child."

"But I do not think he is your father," replied Mrs. Lane.

"Then do you believe," inquired Amanda quickly, "that he is my master?"

Mrs. Lane was silent, and seemed puzzled.

"I hardly know how to answer you," she said in a few minutes. "It does not seem probable that he would resign you to me as he has done if you belonged to him. It is more in accordance with his character to require your services in his household."

"But as a child I could be of little use to him: now that I am a woman, his cupidity might induce him to sell me away from my home and you."

"He would not dare do that."

"Why not?" inquired Amanda anxiously.

"Because, though he has not much character at stake, he would fear the strong disapprobation which would be visited upon him were he to expose you for sale. You know slaves are never sold except when some great calamity overtakes a family, and deprives them of the means of providing for their servants."

"But, dear Mrs. Lane, he is a Northerner, and does not stand well here; I fear he is too reckless to regard what people think of him."

"Nevertheless, depraved as he is, there is a moral influence to which he must submit. But even supposing the worst—that he should try to sell you—could I not buy you? No one would bid against me; and I should purchase only to free you."

"Then you do believe that I belong to him?"

"Yes—no—I do not know what to believe. It is such a strange case, wholly without precedent."

"The fear of what he has in his power to do, torments every moment of my life," replied Amanda, sighing.

"You must not distress yourself by imagining trouble: I am very certain that your fears are unfounded; for unless Scotter can produce positive evidence of African descent he cannot dispose of you, since the law would forbid it. And I am firmly convinced from your appearance that you are of pure white blood. But for your peace of mind, I will urge my husband on his return to take immediate measures to clear up the mystery of your parentage. So let us drop for the present a subject so painful to both of us."

Thus forbidden by Mrs. Lane to converse with her upon the idea which haunted her day and night, Amanda was the more readily entrapped into interviews with Jed. Mrs. Lane little suspected how firmly rooted in Amanda's heart was the imaginary terror, and she thought that by speaking no more of Scotter, it would sooner than any other course restore her quietude. She could not see Mr. Lane, as he was absent on a hunting excursion; but immediately that he returned, she intended to communicate Amanda's fears. Meanwhile the misguided girl had committed her first false step, concealment! and from that moment might be dated the misery which was destined to follow.

Jed had not awakened love in her heart, but his wily, specious words had taken entire possession of her *mind*. What he said she believed; for however her reasoning faculties might resume their power in his absence and confute his arguments, in his insidious presence what she uttered in opposition to him seemed, even to herself, as the weak stammerings of a child. Pliant, gentle, and trusting, he convinced her that he was acting only for her good; that her doubts arose merely from a love of home. He always praised Mrs. Lane, but he contended that she was powerless to prevent her sale.

Having bent his will to the speedy accomplishment of his purpose, he did not allow a single opportunity to escape him, and every word, every look of hers, served

but to increase his resolution to induce her to abandon her home; and this desire rose until it dominated all others, and he determined to employ artifice and force, if persuasion failed. In the low, pleading tones of his deep, melodious voice, and the strange earnestness of his dark, blue eye, there was something entrancing to the guileless girl, who, though she did not as yet dream of love, still was pleased that *another* should feel such an interest in her fate. With a keen perception of character, and a glimmering that innocence is always unguarded, Jed saw that he could gain his end, if he could but convince Amanda that he was her only friend. He therefore never alarmed her womanly instincts by a word of love; while he led her to infer that the active part which he took in her affairs was the result of generosity and philanthropy.

Such was the man to whom the ingenuous Amanda now gave her hand to shake. With a thrill of delight he took it, but immediately released it. He must master himself, if he would control another.

"Have you spoken to her?" he asked.

"I have; and it is all settled."

"How?"

"If Scotter should sell me, *she* will buy me. Did I not tell you so?"

"*She* will buy you?"

"Yes: are you not glad?"

For a moment it appeared to Jed that all his plans were overthrown: he had not supposed that Mrs. Lane would solve the difficulty in that way. What now should he do? he asked himself.

"Tell me all about it," he then said to her.

She related to him the conversation which she had had with Mrs. Lane, adding in conclusion,—

"When Mr. Lane returns, he will purchase and free me."

"How long will he be absent?" inquired Jed musingly.

"Three or four days, perhaps."

"Indeed!" thought Jed, "I must then act at once."

"Some one," she said, "has been at work among the slaves. Seditious tracts have been distributed to such an extent, that they are almost on the eve of insurrection. Even Mrs. Lane is agitated by the fear of an uprising; and I do not wish to speak to her again about myself, lest she should think that I, too, am ungrateful enough to wish for freedom."

"Would you not risk something to be quite sure of it? Answer me frankly: am I not your friend?"

"If I do, it is not because I am unhappy here; for my home is better than I deserve, and Mrs. Lane is the embodiment of kindness. Still—"

"Still—still what, Amanda? I know there is some latent wish."

"It is to throw off this galling reproach upon my birth."

"Yes, yes, poor child!" he exclaimed pityingly. "It was false kindness thus to nurture a mind, and teach it to long for a place among the highest, knowing that its possessor must remain for ever a dependent, perhaps a slave!"

"That I am not, and if I may trust Mrs. Lane, I never will be," she answered with pride, wounded by his tone and speech.

"And if I should suggest a plan whereby you might escape all these evils, would you have the nerve to second me?"

"A plan?"

"Yes. It is—" He bent his head to her ear and whispered. She uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and as if fearful of trusting herself longer in his presence, rushed away. He gazed after her with a meaning smile, muttering to himself, "It's all right: she nibbles. Let her reflect upon my words all night, and to-morrow will find her in a ripe humour for my purpose."

He instantly resolved to leave Augusta, and taking the first train, in a few hours he arrived at the seaport of Savannah.

Sauntering to the river, where lay several steamers, he went on board of one, and inquired of the captain when his vessel would sail.

"Next Tuesday," was the reply.

"That's the day after to-morrow. At what o'clock?"

"At four a.m.; but you can come aboard, if you like, the previous night."

"How long are you in getting to sea," Jed inquired.

"In three or four hours we lose sight of land."

"Are your state-rooms all taken?"

"Oh no," replied the captain: "we don't have many passengers at this time of year, the month of April being too stormy to suit the ladies, and it's awful on the consumptives, so they go to New York by rail."

"If I should make up my mind to leave in a hurry, could I get two state-rooms the evening before you sail?"

"Without doubt," the captain answered: "there's no chance of a crowd this trip."

While he was thus concocting plans, our heroine was vainly battling with the wild ideas which he had implanted in her mind. In the solitude of night she paced her room, thus reasoning with herself:—

"It would be wrong and ungrateful to do it: not even the *certainty* of freedom could tempt me. Besides, where go, and to whom? Save Mrs. Lane and Mammie, I have no friends. I hope he will go away, for I feel that he could entice me to my destruction. When I listen to him, I lose all self-control, and were he to urge, would surely fly with him. Shall I ask Mrs. Lane to counsel and to calm me? No; she has done all she could to aid my wishes; why, then, needlessly trouble her? I will remain where I am, and trust to the Lord alone for counsel and for succour."

Temporary peace was given in answer to her prayers: tranquillity, however, was not long destined to be hers.

Jed returned the same night to Augusta, and had a lengthened interview with the barman. There was much bargaining between them, but Jed, who could not dispense with his aid, acceded to his terms. The man soon comprehended the part he was to act, and the very next morning sought Amanda, saying,—

“ Scuse the freedom, miss, but a gentleman told me to say that he wants to speak to you on something mighty particler. I think it’s consarnin your peace o’ mind.”

“ Of whom are you speaking? ” she asked.

“ I’m speaking of the jewellery gentleman, who says he’s diskivered the secret you wanted to find out,” replied the man in a meaning way.

“ O heaven! ” said Amanda, giving voice to her thought, “ could he have solved the mystery of my birth? ”

“ Yes, I spec that’s it; and he’s awaitin’ at the end of Squire’s Lane to let the cat out of the bag.”

“ I cannot consent to a clandestine meeting,” she answered indignantly: “ it is not a modest woman’s place.”

“ Waal,” drawled the Yankee quietly, “ I kinder s’pose that you don’t love this air feller.”

“ No,” she answered decidedly.

“ An’ he don’t love you; so, as it aint no affair o’ *that* kind that you’re going about, I don’t see no harm in it myself, particlerly as it’s to sorve the mystery of your borth. I’ve got sisters myself, and I shouldn’t like ‘em to be running about at the beck and call of every feller, unless it *was* to sorve the mystery of their borth, which is a mighty important thing, I reckon, and no mistake. Besides, he’s onny got an hour to stay in Augusta, and if you don’t hurry off, you’ll lose the chance of clearing up this mystery.”

Urged by this consideration, Amanda left the man, and was soon in Squire’s Lane, where she desried Jed.

“ Amanda,” he said tenderly, “ I am sorry to have made you come to me, but I knew that I could not converse so

freely at the inn as I wish to do. I felt that I could not leave the South for ever without bidding you Good-bye, and ascertaining if you are still determined to throw away the only opportunity you may ever have of escaping this life of disquietude."

"What do you mean?" inquired Amanda.

"That the moment of your servitude and bondage is come at last, and that I alone have the power to save you."

"You alarm me. Speak plainly and quickly, for I must return to my home."

"Return, then, if you will, and rush upon your destruction; but when once you are fairly in the toils which Scotter is weaving around you, think of me, and that I showed you how to escape."

"Scotter!" echoed Amanda, trembling and turning pale.

"Yes; Scotter. Your mistress lulled your suspicions in regard to him, but I tell you for a certainty that he is about to sell you."

"Sell me! I cannot believe it."

"But he will: the conditions of sale are already named."

"Even so," returned Amanda confidently. "Mrs. Lane will purchase me."

"It is not to Lane or his wife that you are to be sold, but to a slave auctioneer in New Orleans."

Amanda's face changed to a deadly hue, her lips trembled, and she pressed her hands upon her heart to check its tumultuous beatings. Jed turned aside that he might not see her beautiful face distorted by the agony he had caused. She could not speak. He continued,—

"I see you are pained by this dreadful intelligence, and so was I, although I had predicted it."

"Jed," said Amanda, with a violent effort, and in so low a voice that he stooped to listen, "you tell me that I am to be sold, and that Mrs. Lane cannot buy me."

"Yes. Her delay has been your ruin."

"My kind mistress ruin me! I will *not* believe it."

“ I can give you proofs.”

The barman had been loitering at a convenient distance unseen by Amanda. He now approached at a sign from Jed.

“ Repeat to this lady,” said Jed, “ the conversation which you overheard last night in the bar-room of the inn.”

“ It war not in the bar-room, it war just outside the door, on the verandy. Well, Scotter came in and called for ginslings for self and friend. It war very late, and they were both winy, so, you see, they talked loud.”

“ Well ? ” said Jed.

“ There war no one at the bar, it being so late. So I mixed the slings, and took ‘em out to ‘em. I set ‘em down on the table, and had a good look at the fellow with Scotter. He war a big man, like Bully Butcher.” The very name made Amanda shudder. He continued, “ As I got inside the door, I heard your name, miss. They didn’t see me ; so, feeling an interest in all that consarns you, miss, I pricked up my ears and listened. They war a haggling about your worth, miss. Scotter wanted more than the other fellow would give. Howsomever, he concluded to pay it.”

Amanda listened with painful interest. “ But this man,” she said, “ was commissioned by Mr. Lane to buy me, was he not ? ”

“ No, miss, nothing of that kind that I could hear. Quite contrary. The man said that he was buying up a lot of negroes to take to New Orleans to sell or swop.”

Amanda seemed on the point of fainting.

“ Come,” said Jed, supporting her, “ all is not lost yet, if you will be guided by me. And when,” he asked the barman, “ is the money to be paid, and the *slave-driver* to claim his property ? ”

“ To-morrow afternoon.”

“ Have you heard enough, Amanda ? Are you satisfied that I have told you the truth ? ”

She faltered forth an assent. The barman turned and left them.

Amanda, bewildered by what she had heard, exclaimed, "So soon, so soon! It seems a cruel dream."

"You will awake to its reality," responded Jed, "unless you place your fate in my hands."

"What would you have me do?"

"Fly with me!"

"No, no," she answered firmly, "I cannot do that. Duty and gratitude alike forbid me to leave my generous mistress."

"Amanda, this is childish. Can you not see that to-morrow you will be torn from her and your home? Duty to her is past, and now begins your duty to yourself. For, if I am not deceived, no more horrible fate could befall you than to be taken to New Orleans by a brutal auctioneer."

The blood mounted to Amanda's face, and she set her teeth together.

"Think, then, of what I offer you: a passage to New York. I leave to-night, and to-morrow you will be free. More than this, *there* no one could taunt you with your tainted blood; no external trace of it exists, and on the honour of a gentleman, your secret shall never be revealed by me. Come, then, with me. Seek another home in another land. Do not hesitate, for time is precious."

He took her hand, which she listlessly resigned to him. His dark eyes lighted up with a wild joy as he exclaimed,—

"You consent, then!"

"Yes: it does not matter now, since I *must* leave my home."

"Come, then, at once, before you are prevented. For even now his spies may be about."

"Come what may," she answered, "I must see Mrs. Lane once more."

"This is trifling; it is weakness. Your resolution will vanish at the sight of her. It cannot be."

"It must be, Jed: it would break my heart to leave without at least a silent farewell."

"Promise not to fail me. Remember the danger in which you stand. Remember Scotter and your future master in New Orleans."

"I promise; and I should thank you for the relief you offer me."

"I will go at once to Savannah to secure state-rooms. The vessel sails to-morrow; and as it is the speediest mode of escape, we must take a bold course."

"Is it an unusual way of flight?"

"Yes. It is better that I should leave alone, for should we be suspected of going together, I could easily be traced. You must come on in the ten o'clock train to-night. Be firm, and the darkness will favour you. Do you go out with a pass?"

"I never go out at night, and therefore do not require one."

"So much the better; and being white, will not be questioned by the police. Should your courage fail, summon the barman; for, like myself, he is pledged to aid the unfortunate runaway, and to him you owe your timely warning. Trust, then, to him, and farewell till to-morrow."

With these words Jed hurried away. Amanda, with care-worn look and heavy gait, slowly returned to the house. Miserable girl! she feared to meet the gaze of any one, lest in her conscious eye might be read the deed she was about to do.

Jed was not in such haste but that he could speak to the barman in passing.

"Has she nibbled?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Jed, with a low satisfied laugh; "she's not only nibbled, but swallowed the bait, hook and all."

"I think I managed it well," remarked the barman, chuckling. "She never even questioned it. I was all of a shake for fear she'd see through it."

"She promises to come on by the ten o'clock train to-night; and should you see signs of relenting, you must remind her that——"

"I understand. No force, of course?"

"No; it will not be necessary, I think."

"I know the conductor: he's a Northerner. A word or two and a little tin would make him shut his eyes so tight that he couldn't see her if he stumbled over her," said the barman.

"All right," replied Jed, who knew that gold sometimes quickens the intellect and presses matters forward sooner than anything else.

CHAPTER V.

A FAREWELL.

AMANDA quietly entered Mrs. Lane's room. Dresses, jewels, gloves, and shawls were strewn about, indicating a hurried departure of the lady. Amanda took up the various articles so carelessly left, and imprinted a passionate kiss on each.

"Dear, kind mistress," she murmured, "farewell for ever! Memory will conjure up your reproaches for this deed, to sadden my happiest moments. The future alone can tell if I can ever expiate this ingratitude. So late!" she exclaimed, glancing at a little watch, and then covering it with kisses. "Fair, senseless thing, when next you lay your jewelled head upon mistress' bosom, give her these kisses, and in each gentle tick tell her I loved her most in parting."

Replacing the watch, with one long, lingering look of affection, she sadly left the room.

She next sought Mammie in the kitchen, and asked for Mrs. Lane.

"Mrs. Withers cum wid massa Bob from New York, and take missus to stay all night wid her at de grandma's house. She axed whar yo was, honey. But what's de matter, chile—yo look so scared and white?" inquired the good old negress, observing Amanda's pale and agitated face.

"I've a strange fancy, Mammie," she replied, "which you must gratify. Come with me to the little room where I first said my prayers."

Mammie, with a bewildered look, took Amanda's small,

white hand in her own, so large and black, and silently they ascended the stairs. On reaching the room, the girl knelt as of old beside the row of clothes, and repeated after Mammie, in the former childish manner, the simple, Divine prayer. Clouds momentarily obscured the moon; hence the negress did not see the tears which moistened Amanda's cheeks.

"Bressed honey," said Mammie, kissing her, "allers remember dis pra'r, and dat He will allers help yo out o' trouble, if yo ax him wid an earnest, humble heart; but I must go now, chile, and finnish de work."

"Kiss me again, Mammie."

"Dat I will, honey, and de wous wish ob dis old nigger's heart am, God bress yo!"

Amanda was now alone; and when Mammie's footsteps were no longer heard in the distance, she softly descended the stairs. It was not yet the hour for the negroes to assemble in the court-yard, and unobserved she reached the Green Pond.

The barman having left the "bar" in charge of a boy, waited about suspecting that she would choose this exit from the house. Catching a glimpse of her light figure hurrying across the bridge, he said to himself,—

"She's off! clean gone! taking the short cut over the fields; and she'll soon be at the deepo. There wont be many passengers by the night trains. It's well for her that this is such a slow hole: she wouldn't get off so easy in New Orleans. Waal, I arned that money easy, and no mistake." With these reflections, and feeling sure that she needed no assistance from him, he turned into the hotel and resumed his occupations.

Amanda's heart beat oppressively, but with a light step she went quickly on her solitary road, fearing to look behind, and seeking to outrun even her shadow. Not a creature crossed the path which she had chosen for its loneliness. The railway station was at the extremity of the town, and on arriving there, it seemed deserted. Presently

a conductor appeared, and inquired if she were going to Savannah that night. She tremblingly replied in the affirmative, and was put into a carriage.

In a few minutes the train began to move. Amanda could hardly credit that she had achieved so much of her journey without molestation, while her impatience to be out of danger was so great that even railway speed appeared slow and tedious.

In the agricultural State of Georgia there are few way-side stations, but when people wish to be taken, they light large bonfires, at which signal the trains stop.

Amanda's fellow-travellers were three men: one had taken off his boots, and with his feet reposing on the back of an adjoining seat, was snoring loudly; the second man was chewing tobacco, and doing his best to convert the whole carriage into a huge spittoon; the third had securely tied up his head in a red handkerchief (impelled to do so, no doubt, by fear of draughts and his neighbour's flying saliva), and the head, bobbing to and fro under a dull oil lamp, was all that could be discerned of him.

Amanda fell into an uneasy sleep, filled with remorseful visions of home, and the kind friends she had forsaken. She knew not how long she slept, but her fitful dreams were suddenly terminated by some one exclaiming in her ear, "Don't be scared, miss."

Thinking it to be Scotter, she awoke with a scream, which caused the bootless man to stop snoring and shout at the top of his voice, "Have the ingyne bust her biler?"

The second wildly tore the handkerchief from his head, and shrieked, "Has the train run off the track?" At the same moment the chewer inquired if they were "*snowed in*," which was not likely to be the case in the month of April in a Southern clime.

"No," the conductor replied to these simultaneous questions—he it was who had so alarmed Amanda—"No, I only came to tell this young lady not to be frightened if she saw the fire."

"Fire!" exclaimed the three men in a breath.

"Yes: we've just entered the pine woods, and find that they are on fire; and as we're loaded with *cotton*——"

"Oh!" groaned the trio.

"We must put on steam and cut through like lightning; for if a spark should set the cotton on fire——"

"This air train would go to blazes," cried the first man.

"Jes so," coolly replied the conductor. "Hold your breath, miss, for at the rate we're going, a sudden jerk might knock it out of you."

The train now began to increase in speed. Our travellers were shooting through a forest on fire! As the heavy train jarred the half-burnt trees in passing, they fell with a great noise, scattering myriads of live coals upon the underbrush, firing it instantly. The speed was sickening in its violence; while the unnatural light pained the eye-balls and bewildered the brain.

"That gal's going to faint," said one of the men, observing the pallor of Amanda's countenance.

"Is there any brandy in this crowd?" inquired another.

"Here's some in this flask," replied one. "Don't be skeered, miss, but jes take a drop o' this, and keep your courage up. At this rate, steam will beat fire all holler, and we shall soon run into Savanny this side up, with care."

"But for the gal's sake," remarked the bootless man, endeavouring to get his feet into his boots, "I should like to slump through another forest on fire. Aint it a mighty pooty sight?"

"I kinder feel powerfully weak, though: it's so tarnation hot."

A few minutes more of anxiety, and the burning wood was rapidly lost in the distance. Shortly after the train ran safely into the station at Savannah.

Amanda immediately made her way to the ladies' room, where, faint, trembling, weary, and alarmed, she waited for Jed, who was not there to receive her.

CHAPTER VI.

AT SEA.

JED came at length, and Amanda greeted him with cordiality, exclaiming however, "How late you are!"

"How early you are!" he responded, smiling. "The conductor tells me that the train is in long before she's due, owing to quick running through a burning pine wood. But come, we must walk to the river, as there are no hacks at this hour."

Morning was sweetly breaking in that balmy clime. No feet save theirs disturbed the quietude of that pretty place, more like an English country town than any other in America: the same small squares; trim, uniform houses overlooking them; fine, tall trees, miniature terraces, and level, well-kept streets.

Not a policeman was to be seen as Jed and Amanda pursued their stealthy walk. He assured her that all danger of detection was now past; that before the household could miss her, she should be far at sea sailing towards New York; and that the very boldness of the plan of escape was calculated to mislead her pursuers, who were more likely to search the adjoining woods than seek her at Savannah.

The change of scene, her first distant view of the shipping, just visible in the uncertain light of coming day, and the excitement, inclined Amanda to think all charming—even her companion, whose judgment she respected, and for whose interest in her welfare she was deeply grateful.

While these thoughts were passing in her mind, Jed

looked upon her downcast eyes and lovely features, owning them to be the type of innocence.

"Amanda," he said slowly, "to avoid suspicion, it will be necessary for you to assume *my name*."

She started and replied, "I cannot consent to that, as it would not be right."

"What name, then," Jed asked, "shall I register as yours on the books of the steamer? Scotter, the name of your master, or Lane, the name of your mistress? Had I not better write under it,—

"'Escaped; a white negress, height, five feet five inches; soft hazel eyes, brown hair, buxom person, complexion like a rose; has a way of looking at you frankly when she speaks. Five hundred dollars reward will be paid upon her delivery to Scotter or to Lane?'

"You *must* change your name, or you will be re-taken. As you have no legal right to any name in particular, from among the many cognomens in the world, you may as well select one at once. Let it be mine, and you shall be my sister during the voyage, which will only last three days."

"It is only because my name is *not Jed*, and by assuming it I should be consenting to a falsehood, that I object, although it would be prudent to do as you advise. It appears to me that nothing can justify an untruth."

"It would be madness to call you Scotter, as it would instantly point out to him your whereabouts," Jed urged.

Amanda was silent. One false step had led to another. She had gone too far to recede, and must continue.

"Look!" exclaimed Jed; "there's our steamer. A few hours more of heart and courage, and you will be free from all apprehension of bondage."

They crossed the plank and descended to the cabin without any notice being taken of them.

Once alone in her state-room, Amanda breathed a sigh of relief. Every step brought her nearer her wishes.

"You had better remain here until we lose sight of land. The stewardess will bring you whatever you may need."

So saying, he left her. Throwing herself on her berth, she sought in sleep to bury anxiety. The attempt was fruitless: every noise without, every footfall seemed to be the arrival of Scotter. Having braved so much, having thrown her whole fate into the keeping of a stranger, and thus far safely advanced on the voyage to New York, Amanda's desire to be there at once increased almost to madness. Still she could not stifle remorse in leaving her home and mistress in the manner she had done. The slight rocking of the ship, and creaking of its timbers, augured a melancholy termination to this secret, rash, unadvised act; and she felt like a criminal on the eve of conviction.

Soon the hurry and bustle of passengers coming on board with their luggage, the talking and shouting of men as they thumped down boxes, which she could plainly hear though removed from the scene of action and tumult, warned her that it must be near the hour of departure. Gradually the steamer was cast loose, and quickly glided away. Then a few shouts from ashore, and last of all the firing of a gun, proclaimed to Amanda that she had parted from her home for ever! Throwing herself on her knees, she strove to ask a blessing on her misdeed, but the prayer was interrupted by a paroxysm of tears, the nerves lost their tension, and falling on the berth exhausted, she at length slept. Some time must have elapsed when she was awakened by a knock at the door, and thinking it to be the stewardess, she said, "Come in." Jed opened the door, and remaining on the threshold, said in a whisper,—

"I congratulate you: we're off, and out of danger."

"Many, many thanks to you."

"Come on deck."

"I can't; I'm so ill."

"You will feel better in the air. I will wait for you in the cabin."

Amanda rose and soon joined him there. The four corners of the cabin had been seized upon by four ghosts of the masculine gender, each with a spittoon between his feet.

"These are consumptives," whispered Jed, "who have wintered in Florida, and being pronounced incurable, are going home to die."

Amanda sighed. "Strangely enough," he continued, "they are all named Smith, although not related to each other. There is a gentleman with two daughters on board, who are also named Smith. The captain told me so, and laughing, said that so many of the same name were as sure to sink the ship as a dozen clergymen."

How indelibly trifling events impressed themselves on Amanda's youthful mind! The fact of seeing so many diseased Smiths, led her ever after to associate all of that *uncommon* name with hopeless consumption.

Being now fairly out at sea, every lamp was swaying to and fro, and every timber creaking forth a doleful inducement to nausea.

Amanda did not consider what she saw on deck *very* interesting. Two or three gentlemen were walking. There was a dreary steering-box, or pilot-house, or whatever its nautical name may be, and a man therein condemned to solitary labour. Then there was an old Miss Smith, engaged in a strenuous but vain effort to keep her parasol from blowing away, her dress from blowing up, her bonnet from blowing off, and herself from being blown bodily down the companion-way.

There was a great deal of sky and a superabundance of water. Amanda, quite convinced of the grandeur of the sea without further investigation, determined to retire to her state-room immediately. Having fully made up her mind to do so, it was unnecessary and unkind in the ship to lurch just at that moment, and pitch her down the stairs against the steward, who was coming up with a bottle of ale in each hand. The unexpected concussion made him drop the bottles, and the report of the corks flying out frightened Amanda into the belief that, having concealed weapons about him, he had unwittingly committed suicide.

Disabused of this fear, she tottered to her berth, and there

remained during the voyage ; the hopeless dejection of seasickness only being disturbed by a conjecture as to why that horrid little porthole was round instead of square, like other windows.

If there be one thing more aggravating than another to a sea-sick person, it is to behold an individual eating voraciously, and enjoying the sea.

Jed was calm, smiling, and perfectly well, and wondered what made people ill: *he* never was better in his life—never.

He became very nautical in his language; at times blandly engaged the captain in conversation; at others talked with the sailors on the sly, earnestly inquiring why they “ hauled up this, what d’ye call ‘em ? and let down that fixin’,” and having learned the technical names of the various “ machines,” retailed them to the lady passengers, fancying, from the noted credulity of the sex, that they would believe that his vast maritime knowledge was gained by great observation and unlimited travel. It is gratifying to reflect that if such an individual as this insists on keeping well, he merits the contempt of every invalid on board.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW YORK.

HAVING made a quick trip, in three days they arrived at New York.

A dull day; not the same soft air, redolent with spring flowers, and echoing the songs of birds, which three days ago Amanda had left in Georgia.

"Come," said Jed, "I am going to take you to the finest hotel in the world."

"Are you so rich, then?" she asked. "I would sooner go to some more private——"

"I am very rich at times," interrupted Jed; "but often my father, who is a queer old fellow, gets angry and stops my remittances; then I am poor. I had had a quarrel with him when I first met you, and that was the reason I was tramping about as a pedler."

They drove into Broadway, and soon arrived at the St. Nicholas Hotel, where Jed at once seemed quite at home. He was not an educated nor a handsome man, but had singular powers of observation, and a faculty of turning small things to account. Pleasant in conversation, and agreeable in manner, he so artfully flattered people's self-esteem, as soon to impress them with the belief that he was a very clever man. Having travelled much, he could name various great personages, whom he claimed as acquaintances, asserting (when no one could contradict him) that he had made a tour in Russia with an English lord, in Spain with a German baron, and when in Paris lived with the family of Madame la Princess de Rieu of the old *régime*.

This native tact was one reason why he so rapidly made friends; since some persons, even in republican America, profess a regard for those aristocratic titles which their own institutions have denied to themselves. The Americans are a lively, sociable, hospitable people, and in general easily approached. Jed made the most of this; and as he never forgot a name which he had casually heard, or a face that flitted by him on the staircase of crowded hotels, he would often accost people as old acquaintances, and thus readily introduce himself wherever his interests might demand; his generous expenditures and excellent manners being sufficient passports as to character.

He was something of a musician, and sang sweetly; a good linguist, too, and a capital dancer: in short, he possessed all the little accomplishments which make gentlemen agreeable in ladies' society; while with the sterner sex he was equally successful, playing billiards and other masculine games to perfection. The very first day he arrived at the St. Nicholas, he made several acquaintances.

About noon he had occasion to go as far as the Battery, and asked Amanda to accompany him. She was delighted with the gaiety of Broadway.

Ladies most richly dressed in gaudy colours thronged the street. Groups of gentlemen were standing on the steps of the various hotels, chatting, laughing, but not forgetting to glance at the loveliness flitting by. A warm April sun was rapidly thawing the ice which had lain so long on the ground.

Open omnibus sleighs, crowded with people, went jingling through the muddy snow. Carriages, cabs, carts, omnibuses, and vehicles of every description, stopped the way. Newspaper boys cried imaginary assassinations of distinguished persons, and the last news from Europe: others whistled shrill airs out of time and tune, forcing the unwilling listener to undergo any amount of auricular agony. The buildings were fine and imposing; the *tout ensemble* novel to our

heroine, who, with Jed, stepped into an omnibus. They had not gone far when it stopped to admit a negress. Amanda watched with evident anxiety what effect this arrival would have upon these few inhabitants of the great, freedom-loving metropolis. She observed disgust and repugnance on every countenance. One female after another left, and then the men took to flight, one loudly remonstrating with the driver for allowing "the darkie" to get in; saying, that "he was not in the habit of riding with *niggers*, and had no notion of beginning now."

The poor coloured woman remained until all departed save Jed and Amanda. She then descended, muttering that "niggers didn't seem no good, nowhar—get nuffin but kicks and cuffs—white folks no better dan black folks, no how you can fix it."

"You told me," said Amanda, "that there was no prejudice in New York against the negro; that blacks were received in the best society."

"*You* will be."

"But that's another matter, since I am *white* in appearance. How do you account for this extraordinary exhibition of dislike?"

"They must have been all Southerners."

"But Southerners do not treat negroes as lepers, whose presence is pollution. They are servants—nothing worse—and are often humble friends."

The effect of this incident was to depress the girl's spirits to such a degree that she was silent during the rest of the ride. Jed soon transacted his business at the Battery, when, returning on foot to the hotel, he suddenly stopped opposite a large building, saying,—

"This is Barnum's Museum; shall we go in? It may drive away your melancholy."

She answered listlessly in the affirmative. Never having been in a museum before, she soon became interested in the "Pink Woman with White Hair," the "Living Skeleton," the "Bearded Lady," the "Fat Girl," the "Smallest

Woman on Airth," the "Siamese Twins," and the "hull lot o' live critters."

The Fat Girl was continually struggling to keep people from pinching her, sticking pins into her, and thrusting aside her dress with canes and umbrellas to see her feet and ankles. The Bearded Lady indulged in an appeal to visitors to "fale" her "b'ard," which request was so often complied with, and so much hair plucked out, partly as keepsakes, but principally to ascertain if the beard were real, that the woman's source of maintenance was in danger of being snatched away under her very eyes.

There is a small theatre in the museum, which is called the "Lecture Room," where biblical and abolition plays are performed.

The Lecture Room is chiefly supported by pious New Englanders, who never go to *theatres*, but when in New York they make a point of taking the "*children to Barnum's*." Once within this dangerous building, they hover about in the vicinity of the Lecture Room, and seem quite astonished when a polite stranger requests them to "walk in, and hear a *lecture*." A lecture being a harmless, and often an instructive thing, they give the man a shilling for his suggestion, and immediately act upon it. These good primitive people are so innocent of the nature of theatrical representations, that they never suspect that the plays entitled "The White Slave," "Joseph and his Brethren," and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," are not lectures, or they would be shocked, and leave so foul a place.

Amanda had never seen a play, but having read the novel of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was pleased to see it acted.

The first scene introduced Eliza and her child to the spectators. Eliza vocally stated that her "massa" was in "the cold, cold ground," which seemed to be an error on her part, as at the conclusion of the melody he appeared, accompanied by Legree. The latter carried a whip of fabulous size, and without any apparent reason gave Eliza a "touch of its quality." During this brief period of agony

she executed a spirited Ethiopian fandango, and disappeared with a pirouette. Topsy immediately entered, and commenced a series of somersaults, forced, no doubt, to take to this novel and rather unfeminine mode of expressing her feelings by the uncalled-for but frequent application of Legree's diminutive bludgeon. He then repaired to the theatrical Ohio to watch the escape of Eliza over the ice, and soon discovered her on an unsteady block of wood, painted white; but, with that blindness peculiar to the stage, he did not see that he was sufficiently near her to lift her from the ice if he really wished to prevent her flight. She escaped; and the curtain fell. The audience hooted and hissed the slave-driver, and cheered Eliza. The orchestra burst forth in the strains of that sweet and touching national air, "Yankee Doodle Dandy, who stuck a feather in his hat, and called it maccaroni;" but who Doodle Dandy was, or what his feather had in common with a delicate Italian dish, is a mystery which probably will never be solved. The spectators were too enthusiastic to make needless criticisms, but whistled, sang, kept time with their boots and sticks, cracked nuts, flung bills at and called and talked to friends at the extreme end of the Lecture Room.

The second act found Eva and Tom in close conversation, which was interrupted by Topsy, pursued by the New England cousin, who, seeing that Tom and the child were doing nothing in particular, paused to deliver an oration on the sin of "shiftlessness;" to which Topsy replied by the inevitable somersault. At this opportune moment Legree appeared, and brought his whip to bear on all indiscriminately. The prim representative of New England drew an antediluvian parasol upon him, and after a protracted struggle, the old lady retreated in disorder, but doubtless sent the low comedian to revenge her, as he at once entered, with a grin on his face and his hands on his knees; and now a desperate fight ensued between him and the infuriated slave-driver. At length the low comedian got possession of the whip, and Legree fled. The victor thrice imitated the

crowing of a cock, and the curtain descended amid tumultuous applause.

The next act called forth many remorseful reflections from Legree, who repeatedly assured "the flies" that he wished he "was in the lowly touched [thatched] cuttige agin," which, if one might judge from his accent, must have been situated in Ireland. The outraged Emmeline surprised him in his moody fit, causing him to exclaim, "What wisible wision do I see afore me? Can *hair* cum buk frum the grave? Oh! ah! alas! if it could, what might I not hear? —a long piece of hair!"

"Hair," replied the woman, with a solemnity suiting the occasion, "once lost, can never return."

This remark produced a curious effect upon Legree: he reeled about as if attacked by the vertigo, and crying, "Slaves, and shrieks, and lashes, and groans!" immediately expired.

With a wild laugh, Emmeline exclaimed, "The revenge, though slow, has come at last! Ha! ha! ho! ho! yes, yes—no, no! I see him! Where? There! No, I don't! Yes, I do! and yet I don't! I come, ha, ha! I come, he, he!" And the poor woman was seized by a malady which terminated her life so suddenly that she had not time to inform the audience of its nature. So ended this pathetic "moral drama."

Being a morning performance, Jed and Amanda returned to the hotel in time for dinner. Notwithstanding the spirited entertainment she had witnessed, she could not forget the incident in the omnibus, nor stifle the thought that Jed had misrepresented the feeling in New York towards the African race.

Her gloom penetrated the hard and worldly-minded man, whose cheerfulness did not return till he was again within the care-destroying precincts of the gay St. Nicholas.

Amanda was half-bewildered by the change from the little inn to the brilliancy of this famous hotel. Gentlemen and ladies in evening dress were sauntering up and down the

spacious, glass-lined halls, which trebled their numbers. In the drawing-rooms singing, music, and laughter were heard from the many guests assembled previous to the dinner-hour.

The swelling, deafening notes of the gong soon summoned them to the dining-room. Jed, having called for Amanda at her door, joined the throng in the halls, handed her to the table, and seated himself beside her.

Though plainly dressed, Amanda did not escape observation, which heightened her embarrassment. She mistook feelings of admiration for surprise that a fugitive slave should intrude her presence upon the more favoured race of the white man, and only banished this thought by remembering that her secret was known but to him who sat beside her.

A band of waiters marched in at a sign from a burly man, a sort of commander-in-chief. There was a hush of voices, as the removal of the covers was too imposing a ceremony to admit of conversation.

The regiment of men, after pacing the length of the long room, stationed themselves behind appointed chairs. The commander-in-chief standing at the end of a table, all eyes were directed towards him. He raised his hand, and the waiters touched the knobs of the dish-covers. He dropped it—they were borne out of sight, and the dinner began.

The old custom of taking wine together still prevails in America. At public tables gentlemen send wine with their names to acquaintances and friends when they are not sitting near them. A lady, if a belle, receives numerous compliments of this kind, but there is no occasion to become inebriated, as she is only required to bow in acknowledgment of the courtesy. On the card, which designates the donor of the wine, he usually writes some flattering lines to his favoured fair, the most approved sentiment being that her eyes are more sparkling than the champagne.

Silks, satins, laces, fans, and diamonds fluttering and glittering; gay voices discussing politics or merrier subjects;

wine flowing freely; the luxuries of hot and cold climes crowded on a table adorned and perfumed by flowers, and shining with silver; with youth and loveliness beaming over all—made up a scene too novel and bewildering as yet to chase from Amanda's thoughts the more impressive facts and incidents which so recently had been engraven on her soul.

After dinner, the ladies and gentlemen returned to the light, dazzling drawing-rooms and mirrored halls, and there, in talking, walking, laughing, singing, and flirting, they beguiled the fleeting hours. Amanda, in spite of Jed's entreaties to accompany him to some place of amusement, retired to her room to review the new conditions of her existence, so fraught with danger and doubts of future happiness.

In this state of anxiety, the remembrance of her last interview with Mammie came to her mind, bringing guidance and relief. With the most affectionate gratitude to that lowly Christian, she knelt and repeated the Lord's Prayer with an earnestness which made her first night in New York one of sweet and refreshing repose.

CHAPTER VIII.

AMANDA MAKES FRIENDS.

"It is Sunday!" exclaimed Amanda the following morning. "How peaceful it is; the quietude broken only by 'the church-going bell.' What a lovely day! How I wish that all Sundays were like this, so that I could always go to church. What church do you go to, Dr. Jed?"

"I'm not very particular," he replied, smiling. "To tell you the truth, it isn't much in my line."

"But I always go to church, so I must get ready at once. See how the people demurely hurry on, fearful of being late. Come, let us go."

"Well," he said, "I don't mind for once, just to please you."

Amanda ran up-stairs to her room, and in a short time returned dressed for walking. In a few moments more they joined the throng pressing towards the Rev. Hard Preacher's church. He was a popular preacher, more coarse than eloquent; sincere, but illiberal and violent. The leader of a strange, fanatical sect, who mistook his oddities for sanctity, he became fashionable, and many went to hear him for this reason only.

When Amanda and Jed entered, the church was already crowded by ladies showily and elegantly dressed. Owing to excess of crinoline, the gentlemen appeared bodiless. In front of where Amanda sat, there was one vacant pew, which the pew-opener approached, followed by a tall Moorish-looking man. The only occupant of the pew seeing a negro about to intrude upon him, held the door, saying,—

"This pew's engaged."

"This is a distinguished gentleman from Hayti, and not an American," said the pew-opener.

"I can't help it: the pew is going to be occupied."

The negro fully comprehending the cause of the *gentleman's* objections, with an angry look turned and quickly left the church.

"That's Colonel White, a red-hot abolitionist," Jed whispered to Amanda.

"Hush! the service is going to begin."

When the Rev. Hard Preacher took his place in the pulpit, there was a dead silence. A well-shaven, sanctimonious, red, hard, shining, chubby face, glistening black clothes, sparkling rings, heavy watch-chain hanging over a shirt of dazzling whiteness, and a delicate cambric pocket-handkerchief fluttering with his emotion, were the specialities of his personal appearance. In a gruff, but not intelligible voice, he uttered a short prayer, at the end of which he rose and somewhat abruptly announced to his congregation that he had discovered a wolf in sheep's clothing in his flock. This extraordinary beginning of a sermon caused a sensation, and people looked suspiciously at each other.

"Yes, I repeat it," he went on, "there is a slaveholder among us; a woman whom I once thought the model of excellence and piety, lives, I grieve to say, by the sweat of the black man's brow. She owns a dozen slaves at least, dresses in purple and fine linen, and lives grandly. But she will learn that no slaveholder enters here but to be rebuked." He paused, and all eyes were turned towards an old lady, who immediately rose, and feeble with age and indignation, tottered from the church; the second who had on that day been morally driven forth from a sacred place where all should worship freely and equally.

After the rustling of silk had subsided, the rev. gentleman began a sermon which was commonplace in all but in being tinged with irreverence, and its conclusion, which, in brief, ran as follows:—

"There are many who contend that political questions should not be introduced into the pulpit. But I differ with them, when it is a question of benefiting our fellow-man. You may guess that I allude to the trouble which now agitates all parts of our country—the slave question. And should I be the instrument of giving one slave his freedom, I shall not have preached in vain. Let us ventilate the subject of emancipation in our homes, in our assemblies; let us bring it up until the wish of the people will force the Government to rid us of the plague of slavery. I believe in uprooting the slave evil, and the slaveholding population, if they will not emancipate. Let us give the black his liberty, on free and unconditional terms. And then what is to be done? There are lands as fair as this, and better adapted to his culture, and he should be sent to colonise some distant part of the earth, where, when centuries shall have rolled adown the eternal avalanche of time, he will arise the founder of a glorious nation! But I wish to call your attention to a case in point. A friend of mine, being lately in the South, rescued a young slave girl as she was on the eve of being burnt at the stake. Being of a frail constitution and unable to work, her master wished to get rid of her, and hit upon this plan. He certainly would have succeeded but for the interference of my friend, who brought her here, and requested me to enlist the sympathies of my hearers in her behalf. Words would fail to narrate the cruelties she endured previous to her escape. She was forced to steal what little food she ate, and was seldom or never sufficiently clothed. In conclusion, let me entreat you to arise and put down barbarities such as these. Arise, and emancipate!"

And, after invoking a benediction on his congregation, the Rev. Hard Preacher watched with evident satisfaction the liberal contribution which was taken up.

As Jed and Amanda left the church and were fairly in Broadway, she said to him earnestly, "I believe that preacher is deceived."

"How so?"

"Because it is impossible that any slave was ever tied to a stake to be burned. No slaveholder is permitted to abuse a slave, even by overwhipping. There are more slaves illtreat their masters, than masters their slaves; but a case of cruelty is rare on either side. To sum all in a few words, I do not think that many slaves would run away, were they not enticed to do so by Northerners. When you told me about New York, and the kind treatment which coloured people receive here, I believed you; but what I saw in the omnibus yesterday, and the unfeeling refusal of that man to let a negro sit beside him in his pew (which remained empty all through the service), shakes my confidence in what you said. No doubt you were deceived yourself; I fear that the poor blacks are made use of to serve some end, perhaps a political one, and then are cast aside neglected and despised."

"Yes," he replied boldly, "I admit there is a large party in the North who want to break down slavery so that they may introduce free labour in the South."

"And is this why you go among a happy, though humble people, and make them discontented?"

"One reason; but there are many, I dare say, who would like to see slavery abolished for a better reason."

"But in enticing a slave from his master, you do two wrong things: you deprive the master of the labour of his man, and you take from the slave shelter, sustenance, and home; it may be that you abandon him to starvation."

"I have not abandoned *you*, Amanda, though I did take you from your home. I have fulfilled all my promises: you are free; you are happy."

Amanda shook her head, exclaiming,—

"Never, so long as my life is a daily falsehood."

"You mean in passing as my sister?"

"Yes. Why can I not now take my own name?"

"What is that?"

She bit her lip and was silent. She had no name, for at the inn she was only known as Amanda.

"There is one name which you might take legally, if you would," said Jed meaningly.

But Amanda did not understand him; and as they had arrived at the hotel, she ran in, leaving him as far from the attainment of his purpose as when he saw her for the first time.

In Amanda's heart there had lain a latent spark of admiration for Jed which he might have kindled into love, had he never brought her to New York, where, combined with much that is good, there is much hypocrisy. She began to suspect that Jed had misrepresented many things; and an untruth was so revolting to her nature, that she shrank from him with repugnance. Could she have comprehended the full depravity of his hardened heart; could she have looked into the future, and have seen the fatal influence he was destined to exercise on her whole life—repugnance would have been outweighed by fear and horror.

Owing to Jed's skill in finding friends, Amanda made the acquaintance of the Reverend Caroline Cleverbawl, a strong-minded lady; of a Miss Wareham, who was on the point of going to Italy with her brother to perfect herself there in the damp art of sculpture; also of Minnie Meek, who intended to accompany the Warehams abroad.

Minnie was an authoress; a tall, gaunt woman, whose sunken, lustrous eyes evinced more will than literary genius. Left an orphan at an early age, with a young brother dependent upon her, she soon found that needle-work was but another name for starvation. She entered a printing office, and learned to set type. Soon after she took to writing as an easier and more profitable mode of subsistence.

Hearing of her struggles to maintain herself and brother, a few influential persons introduced her books into the fashionable world, and from that moment penury was past for Minnie. She established her brother as a merchant

in the West, and by her goodness, even more than by her books, she acquired fame. She was now fast approaching old-maidhood, which age she faced with the calmness of one who is "fancy free."

There was in Amanda's countenance a pensive look; a solicitude which awakened Minnie's remembrance of her own sad youth, and aroused her deepest sympathy. She quickly conceived a friendship for the girl, and to beguile her leisure moments lent her a book of her own poetry. Amanda's eye fell on the following lines, as she opened the volume:—

"HOW BLISSFUL 'TIS TO ROW!"

"When mounts the young moon o'er the stream,
With stars in her bright wake;
When lilies turn their lips of cream
To catch each trembling flake;
As twilight shows the bank's green side
Where sweetest roses grow,
And zephyrs float along the tide—
How blissful 'tis to row!

"Our web-like sails by fairies spun,
Rock Cupid in their bend;
The waters like quicksilver run,
'Neath yielding banks to wend;
The moon has lost, through yonder trees,
The arrows from her bow;
And at her plight, while laughs the breeze,
How blissful 'tis to row!

"The cotters' huts are silent now,
Their little lights are fled.
A cloud skips o'er the moon's white brow:
She grieves that day is dead.
This mellow night, with bark so fleet,
Make heaven here below!
When youth and hope together meet,
How blissful 'tis to row!

“ In life’s stream were we thus to float
 Through mercy’s rising tide,
 With freight of hearts and loving note,
 Like dream of joy we’d glide.
 Ah! could we thus for ever sail,
 Discarding hate and woe,
 In friendship’s light and honour’s gale,
 How blissful ‘twere to row ! ”

The simplicity of these lines, and Minnie’s assertion that she had never evinced any talent for writing, but owed her success to an accidental circumstance, emboldened Amanda to make an attempt in composition; for she had fully resolved to gain her own livelihood, and to leave the man on whose bounty she shrank from depending, while her whole soul revolted at the deception she practised in passing as his sister.

She was not at a loss for a subject, knowing that Southern life was always interesting to Northerners. She therefore recalled, in writing, the scenes of her late happy home, giving them the modest title of “Sketches and Incidents on Plantations,” prudently omitting, however, those peculiar passages in her own life with which the confidential reader is already acquainted.

“How,” she mused, “do ladies get their writings printed? Miss Meek,” she said, continuing her reflections, “seems so kind that I may venture to submit to her what I have written, and telling her frankly what I wish to do, request her advice. Perhaps she may get them published, and thus lead to my earning a livelihood in a manner congenial to my tastes.”

The next day she sought Minnie, who listened good-naturedly to her compositions, remarking, when Amanda ceased to read,—

“I think—in fact, I can promise—that I have influence enough to obtain their publication; and perhaps they will be paid for. Let me see: they might do for the *Anti-slavery Family News-bag*. The editor is a cousin of mine: cousin News-bag, I call him. But you must not write so much in favour of the South. It may be truthful, but it

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won't do *here*. In future you must introduce slaves lashed or burned to death, husbands and wives torn asunder, and children stripped or starved — something dramatic and thrilling. Depict scenes that make the blood run cold, or bring tears to the eyes of the most hardened, and you will make your fortune. I will call on my cousin after my drive. Mr. Wareham is going to take Cleverbawl and myself. Do you drive to-day?"

"Dr. Jed has invited me to do so," replied Amanda.

"*Dr. Jed?* Do you mean your brother?"

Amanda blushed deeply, and was silent.

Minnie cast a searching glance upon her, and their eyes met. Minnie's look revealed that she divined that Jed was not Amanda's brother. Overwhelmed by confusion, Amanda hastily left the room.

In the afternoon Jed and Amanda drove to Greenwood Cemetery.

It is a lovely spot. The broad foot-paths and carriage-roads are shaded by weeping willows and other fine trees. The tombs are handsome and costly, many having the photographs of those buried within fixed in their columns, to give the passer-by an idea of what they were in life. These grounds are not more a "city of the dead" than of the living. Carriages throng the paths, not always on a dismal journey. Youth lingers on the banks of the tree-shadowed lake, and many a vow of eternal fidelity is exchanged in the presence of the tomb.

Unimpressed by the solemnity which such a place creates in hearts susceptible to its influences, Jed drove impatiently on, and into paths not intended for carriages, heedless of the cautions of the grave-diggers, who desisted from their occupations to utter merited rebuke upon his course. Turning into a path narrower than the rest, and careless whether it might lead or what its character, he soon wedged the carriage between the vaults; and the horses, being home-ward bound, and impatient of delay, commenced plunging, snorting, and kicking in the most dangerous manner.

Amanda, screaming with terror, soon brought to her relief a young gentleman, who, darting from among the monuments in front, seized the bridles of the mettled steeds, and succeeded in quieting them. Descending, Jed discovered that the axletree had been snapped by the disaster, and begging the gentleman to stand by the horses until he could obtain assistance, he sought the grave-diggers whose cautions he had so lately rejected. Telling them his mishap, they caught up a rope, accompanied him back to the carriage, and with great adroitness bound up the wounded member securely enough to admit of the carriage being driven back to the hotel.

Although a few words of courtesy only had been exchanged between Amanda and the gentleman during Jed's brief absence, eyes and thoughts had been busier and more eloquent than their tongues, and their regret was mutual as the moment arrived for their separation. Jed overwhelmed the gentleman with thanks, and offering his card, "hoped that the acquaintance so strangely begun might not end here."

"I hope not, indeed," replied the gentleman, with a furtive glance at Amanda. Taking the card, he read upon it, "Dr. Jed, St. Nicholas Hotel," and with pleased surprise remarked, "I also stop at the St. Nicholas; room, one hundred and five. Perhaps I may have the pleasure of meeting you at dinner this afternoon."

"I shall be delighted," Jed answered. And after mutual salutations, the trio parted company, Jed and Amanda returning with abated speed to the hotel.

The danger which Amanda had just escaped was not the cause of her almost speechless drive from Greenwood. But Jed attributed it to that incident, and suspected no other reason. Had he divined her true thoughts, jealousy would have been aroused and upbraidings have fallen from his lips, instead of the cheerful sallies with which he endeavoured to enliven the journey home.

Amanda's thoughts were occupied with the acquaintance

just made, and with the person and noble bearing of the stranger. What a contrast to the flippant and worldly man at her side. It was not the first time she had pondered upon her present doubtful position, awaking anxious forebodings for her future welfare. Such reflections were the price already being paid for her so-called liberty, and with true feminine instincts she came to a resolution which shall be told hereafter.

On reaching the hotel, Amanda went to Minnie's room, to learn if she had been successful in disposing of the "Sketches and Incidents." To her great delight she ascertained that "cousin News-bag" had not only accepted them, but offered some trifling remuneration as an encouragement to continue writing. Amanda's pleasure knew no bounds.

"Dear Minnie," she said in a trembling tone, "we have known each other but a short time, yet I feel convinced that you are one to whom I might disclose a terrible secret without fear of your scorn."

"Should it not be to *your* discredit, you may rest assured of my sympathy; and looking into the pure depths of that guileless eye, I am convinced no guilt can harbour itself in your heart," replied Minnie.

"Thanks. To-morrow, then, at ten o'clock, shall I come to you? I sadly need friendly counsel, or I should not ask you to accept my confidence."

Amanda now retired to her room to prepare for dinner. As they entered the dining-room, Jed said to her,—

"I've found out that the name of the gentleman we met to-day is Carlton. He's a rich Bostonian, fond of science and travel. He's always going about with parties of mineralogists, botanists, and people of that kind."

Hardly had Jed finished speaking, when Carlton approached, and requesting Jed's permission, took a chair beside Amanda.

Carlton was evidently young. His face was strikingly handsome, with features singularly regular. His form

was tall, well-proportioned, betokening health and vigour. His complexion, naturally light, was darkened by exposure to the sun.

Carlton had been educated in Europe, and had seen and travelled much. Gifted with great conversational powers, and accustomed to cultivated society, he made a most favourable impression on Amanda. As she silently compared Jed and Carlton, instinct more than judgment convinced her that one was the assumption, the other reality. Jed affected to be a gentleman : the other was so naturally as well as by education.

Amanda's face was not faultless, judged by the classical standard. But with a mouth so charming in its expression, eyes so tender and confiding, a skin so fair and satin-like, hair so soft, and a figure so graceful in its round outlines, she would have inspired love where many an acknowledged beauty would have failed. Her manner was so ingenuous and girlish, her disposition so amiable, that she seemed silently to solicit protection and guidance. Altogether Amanda was so gentle and womanly, that Carlton, who had whispered his sweet nothings in the ear of many a proud and lovely lady, felt his heart fill with strange admiration for the childlike creature now listening with pleased surprise to every word of his.

CHAPTER IX.

THREE DISCLOSURES.

The next morning, as Amanda was leaving her room to keep the appointment with Minnie, the book-keeper of the hotel met and asked to speak with her in an adjoining drawing-room. Wondering what he could have to say to her, she followed him. Although knowing him to be the clerk (or book-keeper), she had never yet spoken to him. In an impudent tone he said,—

“I’ve stepped up, miss, to know if *you’re* going to pay this bill, as *he* won’t.”

“What bill do you mean?” she asked, highly offended by the man’s manner.

“Why, the bill that Jed’s run up for you and him, that’s what I mean,” he replied insolently.

Amanda turned pale, and exclaimed, “The hotel bill?”

“Yes, just. And what’s more, if you don’t pay it pretty quick, you’ll be obliged to get to other quarters.”

“I do not understand you,” she said haughtily, although her heart beat violently.

“It’s plain enough, it seems to me. We don’t keep *blacklegs* in this hotel a moment longer than they pay up, and if luck’s against him, that’s his affair, not mine.”

“Am I concerned in this conversation? for really I do not know to what you allude, or of whom you speak.”

“Pshaw! You know as well as I do that he is one of the fancy,” he answered.

“*He?*—who?—‘fancy?’—what *do* you mean?”

“Well, miss,” said the man, becoming a little more

respectful as he observed the look of surprise and pain upon her face, "in plain words, Dr. Jed, your brother, is a gambler."

"A gambler!" reiterated Amanda: "impossible!"

"Fact, miss, and no mistake; but as there are plenty of that sort in this city sharper at the business than he is, he's lost all he had, and can't pay his board; so you must both find other quarters."

"How do you *know* that he is a gambler?" Amanda uttered the word with repugnance.

"Do you think that I've been in the public line all my life without knowing a fancy man the instant I clap eyes on him? Besides, he frequents the different gambling h—ls, and last night he lost his last red."

At these words, Amanda darted such a look of scorn and disgust on the clerk, that he opened his mouth in astonishment; and drawing the folds of her dress about her, as if she feared they might be contaminated in passing him, she left the room with the speechless dignity of an injured queen.

The clerk indulged in a long whistle, and thrusting his hands in his pockets, muttered to himself,—

"It's all right: *she's* got enough money to pay the bill, or she'd never come the grand in that way."

Amanda paused as she ascended the stairs to Minnie's room. Overwhelmed and bewildered by the disclosure which had just been made to her, she endeavoured to collect her startled thoughts. She had nerved herself to reveal the secret of her life, and if Minnie should not cast her from her with scorn, to implore her advice as to the best manner in which to part with Jed; for she had *determined* to leave him, and thus appease her conscience and sense of propriety. But to know that she had accepted the bounty of a gambler, though for so short a time, shocked her; and to impart that fact to another, she felt would greatly increase the pain of the first disclosure.

When Amanda abandoned her home merely to be released from the fear of being sold by Scotter, she anticipated no

evil consequences from the act; now, on finding herself in such a dangerous position, she experienced the utmost alarm and anxiety.

“ So sailors, when Charybdis’ gulfs they shun,
Amazed, on Scylla’s craggy dangers run.”

She mechanically reached Minnie’s door, and by a violent effort prepared herself for the dreaded communication. On knocking, a voice from within bade her enter. She did so, pale and trembling. Minnie would have greeted her in her usual cheerful manner, but observing the whiteness of Amanda’s face, quivering lips, and eyes that sought the ground, sprang towards her, saying,—

“ What has happened? Tell me what you suffer. Am I not your friend? and have I not a woman’s heart to sympathize with yours?”

“ You will scorn, perhaps condemn me,” Amanda answered. The look of sorrow which her features wore in the vanished days of childhood, suddenly returned, and awakened pity in Minnie’s heart.

“ Be the revelation what it may,” she gravely said, “ I am not so blameless that I dare sit in judgment on others. Speak freely, then. Who knows but afterwards we may be better friends than ever? It is only one who has suffered can truly sympathize with and console another in affliction.”

Emboldened by Minnie’s words, Amanda confided to her all the mysterious and unhappy circumstances which induced her to elope with Jed. She told her that Jed had advised her to assume his name and pass as his sister, the better to elude detection and apprehension. In conclusion she added her singular interview with the book-keeper, and thus, at the very moment when she had resolved to leave Jed, learned that he was a gambler.

Having proceeded thus far in her narrative, Amanda sank into a chair, overcome by shame and remorse.

Minnie gazed at her for some time silently. There was

evidently a struggle in her mind : prejudice was striving to keep down her better nature. At length she asked rather sternly,—

“ Do you love this man ? ”

“ No,” cried Amanda.

“ Have you told me all ? ”

“ All.”

“ What are his feelings towards you ? ”

“ I know not. He has never spoken of love, or addressed me in any but the most respectful manner.”

Minnie searched Amanda’s face, as if to determine the truth or falsity of her statement. She bore the investigation with unflinching firmness. Satisfied at length, Minnie extended her hand to her, saying,—

“ I believe you. Yes, strange as the story is, I believe it. This curious entanglement of truth and deception must soon have led to your utter ruin. You might always have remained as innocent as now, but the world, so rigidly proper, usually accepts appearances without inquiring into realities. Reared as you were, and tempted as you have been, I might have done the same.” After a pause she said,—

“ But since you are resolved to leave Jed, where will you go ? ”

“ I do not know,” replied Amanda sadly. “ I have no friends, neither have I any accomplishments wherewith to gain a living; but I am willing to lead the most humble and laborious life, when once away from Scotter and from Jed.”

Minnie was silent some minutes, and then said,—

“ Our pleasant party at this hotel will shortly be broken up. Mr. Carlton is going to the Rocky Mountains, and after a short visit to my brother in Toledo, I leave with Miss Wareham for Italy. Will you go with me to the West ? The editor of the *News-bag* is pleased with your little sketches, and will pay for them. It will not be enough to support you, but during the fortnight we shall pass with my brother, he may think of some means whereby you can

gain a livelihood. You must no longer be called Jed. Let me invent a name for you. Amanda—Mandaville ! there, will that do—Mandaville ? it is only a slight addition to your Christian name."

"It will do admirably," she replied ; and whilst thanking Minnie for her invitation, a servant came to say that Dr. Jed wished to see Amanda in the drawing-room. Having delivered her message, the maid left them.

"I will never see him again," said Amanda, giving way to feelings of indignation.

"But you must," said Minnie. "Not only your secret, but your good name, is in his power : it would not be wise to anger him. Besides, be his calling what it may, he has treated you with benevolence and respect ; therefore be grateful, for there is some goodness in the worst of God's creatures. Go, take leave of him—gently, but firmly and for ever!"

Amanda threw herself into the arms of her generous friend, and quitted her. She found Jed in the drawing-room, who gaily greeted her, saying,—

"Come, Amanda, we must leave this hotel : it's rather expensive, and I've engaged rooms elsewhere."

In a constrained and trembling voice, which she vainly strove to calm, she replied,—

"I thank you for your consideration. I am also grateful, deeply grateful, that you aided my unwise wish to leave my home, and for your protection as far as this city. That I have remained dependent upon your liberality during the short time I have been here, was wrong, but unavoidable. Nothing, however, now is left me but to thank you again for your kindness, and to say, Farewell."

During this speech Jed stood like a statue, with his eyes fixed on the ground. When she ceased speaking, he drew himself out of his reverie, and laughingly replied,—

"You're not serious, of course. What could you do should you leave me ? Those pretty, delicate fingers could

never work like a menial, and you're too proud to beg.
Come, then, get ready to go with me."

"Never," she exclaimed firmly.

Jed turned pale, and approaching nearer, whispered angrily in her ear,—

"Have you resolved to leave me?"

"I have," she answered in the same decided tone.

"Think what I have done for you," he urged, throwing into his voice all the pathos of which he was the master.

Amanda was silent for a moment, and then said,—

"I prepared myself to meet your reproaches, but not to falter from my determination."

"You are offended," he answered, his eyes beaming with tenderness, "that I could so long remain a daily witness of your beauty without expressing to you my love. Were I insensible to your charms, I should be less than man. I adored you from the moment I first beheld you, and in that moment resolved to make you mine. It was this absorbing passion which led me to entice you from the inn, and no nonsensical anti-slavery feeling——"

"Can I believe that you worked upon the one dominating thought of my brain to serve your own selfish purpose?"

"That is a hard word to apply to me. I enticed you from your home because I loved you. I did not at once tell you so, as I saw that your whole heart was set on the phantom of freedom, and in it there was no room for any other passion. I waited until gratitude should engender love. You do not answer. Think of what you are—illegitimate, a white negress, a fugitive slave!—still I love you, and offer you an honourable name: will you be mine?"

He sought to take her hand, but she retreated from him; and though striving to repress it, there was a curl of disdain on her lip as she replied,—

"I should never be a *gambler's* wife, even if I loved you, which I do not."

At these unexpected words, Jed's countenance worked with ill-concealed rage, and grasping her rudely by the arm, he cried,—

"I have never yet been baffled by a *woman*, and shall not now. You must be mine; and since you repel fair offers, force shall be the umpire." Drawing a pocket-pistol, he held it to her head, and deliberately cocking it, said, "Consent, or——"

"Stay!" cried Minnie, entering. Startled by a determined voice, Jed hastily concealed the weapon. Like most men who are cowardly enough to threaten the weak and defenceless, he was easily awed by physical or moral courage.

"This lady," Minnie continued, "is my guest at present, and I will see that she is not compelled to act contrary to her own wishes."

"*Your guest!* impossible. You, no doubt, think her your equal. Learn from me that she is a fugitive slave, a white——"

"Her history is already known to me," interrupted Minnie, calmly extending her hand to Amanda.

"But I have a claim upon her," cried Jed furiously, "and will appeal to the law to uphold it."

Minnie smiled, and said, "You forget that Amanda is *free*, and in an abolition city. Before appealing to the law to uphold an imaginary claim, remember that you did not purchase, but *stole* her from her master. The Southerners resent all tampering with slaves, and Judge Lynch, once on your track, will dog you to your death. This girl has chosen me as her protector; and unless you quietly depart, leaving her with me, I will myself resort to litigation, and denounce the illegality of the act whereby you claim her."

Jed saw that his threats failed to alarm the clear-headed Minnie, and reflecting that "discretion is the better part of valour," replied, with a sneer,—

"You, madam, are beneath my vengeance, but this ungrateful half-breed yet shall learn my power to do evil. Go, then, Amanda, with this brave protector of female inno-

cence ; but think not to escape me, for when your cup of happiness is full, I, though almost forgotten, will appear to dash it from your lips. As your evil genius, I will hover about you to blast all hopes of love and joy."

Amanda, trembling with fear, threw herself into Minnie's arms, and Jed, infuriated by disappointed love and baffled plans, rushed out of the hotel, without observing that two men were standing close to the door. As soon as he was out of hearing, one said to the other,—

"Is that him ?"

"Yes ; I used to see him at Macpherson's gambling saloon, and could swear to him in a thousand."

"Come on, then, quick."

Without further colloquy they started off, and soon gained upon Jed. Deeply absorbed in passionate schemes of revenge, he did not even notice that he was followed. The night was drawing in, and he stopped a moment mechanically, and gazed at the lamp-lighter hurrying past. As Jed paused the men approached, and one, laying a strong hand on Jed's arm, said,—

"You're my prisoner."

"Some mistake," muttered Jed, a deadly pallor spreading his face.

"No; you're John Judkins, *alias* Dr. Jed; and the crime which you are accused of is forgery."

CHAPTER X.

AN ABOLITION MEETING.

THAT next day was the last which Minnie was to spend in New York. For Amanda's sake she was glad to hasten where Jed could not discover the object of his love and hate. She feared, too, that Amanda might be sought by Scotter in New York; and her chief wonder was, that he had not already found her.

There was to be an abolition meeting that night, and the Rev. Caroline Cleverbawl was announced to speak in behalf of an escaped slave. Minnie had promised the rev. lady to be present, so that Amanda was forced to accompany her friend, as the events of the previous day had rendered her too nervous to remain alone.

The Hall was crowded when they reached it.

The majority of the ladies present preferred the Bloomer costume; *i.e.*, Turkish trousers and slippers, dress reaching no further than the knees, the whole attire surmounted by an evening coat, and on the head a broad-brimmed hat.

The gentlemen were habited in a style that seemed to have for its aim the opposition of all recent fashions: coats, boots, hats, and gloves were in reduced circumstances; even the umbrellas had a parched look, as if dusty from drought, and rusty from handling. Near a table at one end of the Hall sat the interesting object of the meeting, a very ugly negro, and behind the table the star-spangled banner hung languidly against the wall.

There was a good deal of talking as friends met, and strangers had little disputes about seats. People were

heard to wish that “*some* persons would come earlier, and not disturb those who had arrived at a proper hour;” at which “*some* persons” trod on others’ toes, as if in revenge for the rebuke, and then wedged themselves into almost impossible places.

A tall man rose at the table, and by clearing his throat, endeavoured to attract attention; upon which the audience made a dreadful noise, in getting quietly settled in order to hear him.

“I am happy to state,” he commenced, amid a scale of gradually subsiding coughs.

“I am happy to state,” he repeated—but a little half-stifled cough *would* start up here and there, to be instantly frowned down by those who had finished *their* coughing—“that the meeting to-night promises to be an unusually interesting one. A slave, a crushed and degraded man, free at length, after many hardships and

‘Hair-breadth ’scapes by flood and field,’

free by the will of Providence and the help of man, no ignoble worker in the holy cause, he reaches our hospitable city, and comes to-night to solicit the aid of our pious brethren and sisters, to enable him to beat back the human blood-hounds on his track, and to set up as a barber. He will speak of his sufferings and unfold his wrongs.”

The eloquent chairman then sat down amid loud cheers, while the negro rose, and with a sidelong jerk of his head commenced his dreadful history.

“Ise a runaway nigger, *I* is. When de ice friz de ‘Hio, I tout I’d luf ole massa ; so I walks ’cross de ribber to Cincinnati. Dat’s de meanest place on arf fur niggers: white folks dar don’t like black folks no how. So I jumps on de cars to Clevolum, and de brokesman frow my hat overbood ; but I clings to de cars till I gets to de city; den I hide myse’f in de boat which go to Buffolum, and de captin no seed me till I walks ashore. Dar de free niggers send me *yah, an’ yah I is.*”

This pathetic speech excited great commiseration ; whereupon the chairman informed the audience that the Rev. Caroline Cleverbaw^l desired to address them. With a solemn air the rev. lady approached the table, and casting a timid look upon it, began,—

“Friends and supporters of this holy cause ! You all know my sentiments as regards freedom ; therefore I need say little to define the platform on which I stand. I am a woman, it is true ; but what did Nelson say ? Can no one answer me ?” As no one seemed inclined to do so, she answered herself.

“Nelson said, America expects every woman to do her duty ; and I respond to his appeal. I do but my duty when I call upon every woman and man (though *he's* a secondary consideration), to tear up slavery root and branch, to sweep the slaveholders from the face of the earth, and make buttons of their unburied bones, so that in death, if not in life, these fire-eaters, these man-hunters, may be of some service.

“It is the duty of every woman, on every occasion, to give her oppressor, man, a piece of her mind——”

Hereupon a Bloomer jumped up, and brandishing aloft an obese umbrella, and throwing herself into an attitude expressive of a fixed determination to defend herself from the encroachments of an imaginary army of men, cried,—

“Them's my sentiments !”

“Keep to slavery,” shouted a man.

“And so I do keep to slavery,” replied the ready Caroline ; “for slavery and women are synonymous terms. But this glorious Republic, impelled by the loud voice of our outraged sex, is on the point of rectifying THAT ! We shall soon be free ! free to vote, to legislate, to declaim either as preachers or as lawyers ; free, in short, to assume any of those glorious callings which selfish man has usurped.

“Women ! sisters ! arouse, I entreat you ! Owing to your weakness this calamitous state exists. Like the poor negro, you have been so oppressed from century to century,

that your tyrants have become emboldened to declare you to be unfitted by nature for *their* occupation; that household drudges you are, and so must remain—their tools, their slaves, their *wives*!

"But this blue and gloriously-bespangled banner has long enough waved in mockery over our down-trodden race. I, a weak, timid woman, assert the right of woman to wield the sword, the pen, the forceps, and the maulstick. Why are we excluded from the seats of legislature, the judge's bench? Why are we not allowed to ballot? Who are the bravest in battles? The women who follow the camp. Who are the most profound and successful writers? Women. Who the most skilful doctors? Women. The most celebrated painters? Women. The most eloquent and untiring speakers? Women. The greatest poets? Women. I could quote hundreds of examples to prove this platform. And yet, with our multitudinous abilities, there is nothing left us but the needle and the thimble. Since he leaves us no other weapon, let us fling aside the thimble, vile emblem of drudgery, unsheathe the needle, and upon him!"

"I loudly assert, I assert the right of woman to love and wed if she will, freely when and where, whom and how she pleases. In ending this brief speech, I cast *my* vote for free love, free speech, free negroes, free women, free press, free soil, and Fremont."

Deafening cheers followed this favourite political cry.

"What a silly old creature!" whispered Minnie to Amanda: "let us go."

They rose and began to struggle through the crowd.

"Ah, Miss Jed! Miss Meek! are you alone? Will you allow me to see you back to the hotel?" inquired a fine manly voice. Amanda trembled: *she* could not mistake those tones; for those whom we love shed an effluence around them wherever they move. Though the eye see not, the soul is aware of the cherished presence. It was Carlton.

"Ah, Mr. Carlton! you're quite a blessing to unpro-

tected females," said Minnie, who had acquainted him (when he called in the morning) of their intention to attend the meeting. They returned to the hotel. Amanda, releasing her arm from Carlton, tripped lightly up the stairs. This gave him an opportunity to whisper to Minnie, "Do, Miss Meek, allow me to speak a few moments with Miss Jed."

"Certainly, Mr. Carlton: I will leave you in the drawing-room for a short time."

Faithful to her word, Minnie soon left her two friends together. She was surprised at his request, but conjectured that the communication which he intended to make to Amanda, was of that nature which every woman expects to hear at least once in a lifetime.

"Can he know her history?" she asked herself, seeking her own room, and beguiling the period of her requested absence by a train of thought. Minnie was only a woman, and it therefore occurred to her that if mutual love should shed its light on Amanda's strange life, "the person who would deprive her of such happiness would not be Minnie Meek."

Left alone with Carlton, alone for the first time, Amanda trembled. The hotel was unusually silent: now and then a distant footstep was heard. In the drawing-room the gas was lowered, casting a subdued light over the luxurious apartment. They were standing within the arch of a large bow-window; and throwing back the silken crimson curtains, Carlton gazed with undisguised admiration on the fair face which the moon's rays, flowing in upon, made paler than her own emotion. She blushed deeply, and turned her head away—slight but eloquent action, conveying hope to his doubting heart. Love is so simple and brief, yet decided in its proofs: a momentary look, a light pressure of the hand, and the secret is revealed. Love—subtle, ethereal power!—cannot be predicted nor enforced in its choice. It is freedom personified, though the most abject slave when once the delicate plant has taken root.

There are moments in life when we are peculiarly sensitive to outward impressions—circumstances incidental to existence tend to render the impressibility active—moments when but a furtive glance of a half-averted eye will arouse the latent power of love into a burning flame, which sweeps away, by a single impulse, all opposing forces. It was this mutual state of rapture which existed between Carlton and Amanda: each knew it, each felt it; and though disappointment might come to both, their affection would still remain eddying in the last flickerings of existence. Amanda was silent. Carlton was unwilling by words to break the blissful spell with which love had entranced them both. Her quietude and pallor were to Carlton mute evidences of a passion as fervent as his own. The small hand, which he would not release, trembled in his ardent pressure. Amanda's pensive beauty, and that magnetic feeling which attracts one to another, had taken possession of Carlton's soul, and led him to yield readily to the rash passion of a few days' birth. At length he spoke in a low, earnest voice, the slight tremor of his exquisitely chiselled lip betraying his agitation.

"Pardon me, Miss Jed," he said: "I am about to say that which may appear to you premature, perhaps presumptuous. It is the old story, Miss Jed, yet ever new, ever fresh: I love you."

Amanda started, and exclaimed incredulously, "Love me?"

"Fervently and for ever! Dare I hope that——"

He checked himself, surprised at the anguish depicted on Amanda's face instead of the joy he had fondly hoped to see there.

"You must forget me," she replied. "With one effort cast me from your heart for ever. There is a ban upon my happiness, a mark upon my forehead."

"Impossible!" he answered: "you, so young, so lovely! Tell me that I am not indifferent to you, and I will——"

"Farewell. I dare not listen longer. It is better that thus we part, never to meet again."

So saying, Amanda bent a stealthy, loving glance upon him, and glided quickly from the room.

Carlton stood for a moment gazing after her in mute amazement, then descended to the smoking-room to find Jed, hoping that the *brother* would explain the strange language of the *sister*. He sought in vain; and making inquiries for Jed of the voluble clerk, he learned that he had suddenly disappeared, with a party of gamblers it was supposed, leaving his account unsettled.

"Gambler!" said Carlton to himself, as he turned away. "So, then, I have been friendly with a gambler, and thrown my heart away upon a sharper's sister. This was what she meant: it is indeed a mark upon her forehead. Lovely vision! it *is* better that thus we part. Farewell, an eternal farewell."

CHAPTER XI.

THE SMITH FAMILY.

CARLTON determined to leave New York at once, and, in order to divert his thoughts from Amanda, hastened to Boston, where his mother resided; and after spending a few days at home, he announced to her that he had resolved to travel for some time.

"If you are going to Niagara Falls," she said, "I will give you a letter of introduction to the Smith family."

"I may go there," he answered: "I have formed no plans yet. But who are these people, and where did you meet them?"

"At the Browns'. You know the Browns go a great deal to New York, and made their acquaintance there. The Smiths are on a tour through America, prior to taking their daughters to Europe. I liked the youngest girl very much, and I gave Mrs. Smith a letter of introduction to you. In fact, she insisted on it when I told her I had a son in New York."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. The elder daughter asked me a great many questions about you: your profession, prospects, and whether you were married or single."

"How very kind!" said Carlton.

"Was it not? The Browns gave them a large party when they were here, and the younger daughter was quite a belle; so if you should meet them at Niagara, I dare say you will find them very agreeable people."

Carlton dutifully took the letter, and after bidding his

mother an affectionate farewell, listlessly started on his journey.

He determined to proceed at once to the White Mountains, a favourite watering-place. Arriving at Portland, Maine, he continued on without delay, and when within about three hours' ride from the White Mountains, he entered the railway carriage set apart for ladies, but which gentlemen were permitted to occupy. There was only one vacant seat, which he took, and found himself in the presence of a large woman, and by her side a girl of very prepossessing appearance. Opposite them sat a fat, coarse man, with a red face, richly but vulgarly dressed; next him was a prim, old-maidish-looking lady, and near her a man enveloped in a shaggy great coat. His hair was rough and uncombed, his long beard neglected, and he was blind in one eye: altogether, his appearance was not in his favour. There was an anxious look on the features of the prim lady as Carlton entered, which was soon accounted for by the conduct of the man in the shaggy coat; for on his knees he held another coat, from the pocket of which projected a revolver. Garotting was then a favourite pastime with the lower classes; and as this man beguiled the tedious moments by folding and refolding this coat, which act necessitated the exposure of the revolver, solicitude and alarm naturally agitated the female mind. At length he shifted the revolver from one pocket to another. This brought a loud scream from the lips of the prim lady prior to fainting. Hearing this, with an earnest but misdirected zeal for her restoration, Carlton drew forth a flask, and sprinkled some brandy on her face. The young girl burst into a laugh, much to his astonishment. The stout lady took the bottle from his hand, saying,—

" You air *wery* good, sir, but brandy is not *the* thing in this 'ere case. Might you have some camphire or cologne?"

" Don't bother, mother," said the young girl, still laughing: " she always gets over them of herself."

"Susan!" reproachfully exclaimed the lady who had fainted, suddenly coming to. "Oh!" she murmured, glancing at Carlton piteously, "*that* pistol!" and gently sank back into her seat.

The owner of the pistol smiled grimly, saying,—

"Waal, ole gal——"

"Old gal!" echoed the lady, effectually recovering both her senses and her temper.

Here the conductor came in to know if any accident had happened.

"Why," said the man, "I war jus' fussin' round with this 'ere shootin'-iron, when that ole gal ketched sight of it and screeched out. Never mind, mum; to please you and quiet your narves, I'll give it up to the conductor till you and me part comp'ny. Take keer on him, conductor: he's got an awk'ard notion of going off when you aint expecting it. Don't put him whar the bonnets air; for not being used to women fixin's, he might take aim and send 'em all to Davy Jones's locker; then I should have to pay the breakage."

As he handed the pistol to the conductor, the prim lady gave a slight scream.

"Don't be frightened," continued the man: "I takes aim at prettier birds nor you."

"Perhaps, friend," said Carlton, "you will be good enough to make no more remarks which can give offence to this lady, whose alarm is very natural."

"Oh, sartainly, sir; sartainly. I don't want to hurt no one's phelinks, if they *air* ole and ogly; but she didn't think I had none, I guess, when she thought I war agoing to massachree her. If every returned Californun's to be took fur a murderer, they better not come back. Arter this, when women's consarned, I'll hang out in the smoking-kur."

So saying, he left the carriage to put his resolve into immediate execution.

"Well, *I'm* glad that *he's* subsided," said the stout lady, with a sigh of relief.

"Retired, you mean, ma," whispered the prim lady. "I am very much obliged to you, sir," she continued, addressing Carlton, "for your kindness."

"Pray don't mention it. I made a mistake in sprinkling brandy on your face, which this lady——"

"Mrs. Benjamin Franklin Washington Smith," she interrupted, blandly smiling.

"Indeed! Mrs. Smith, of New York, lately on a visit to the Browns of Boston?" inquired Carlton.

"The wurrly same. Do you know um?"

"Slightly. My mother, Mrs. Carlton, of Boston, knows them better than I do."

"Sakes alive! air you Mrs. Carlton's son?"

"To whom we have a letter of introduction?" demanded Angela, the lady who had fainted.

"Exactly; and I have a letter of introduction to you," replied Carlton.

"How strange, to be sure," said Mrs. Smith, putting out her hand, which Carlton shook. Miss Angela extended hers, which he also shook; but the young girl shut her eyes and pretended not to see him. Mr. Smith had instantly fallen into a doze after the departure of the Californian. Mr. Smith was one of those fortunate individuals who could go to sleep at any moment, in any place, in any noise, and wake at any moment most convenient to himself. Yet he was never known to acknowledge that he more than closed his eyes: indeed, if one might trust his statement, he had never "slept a wink" in the whole course of his life.

"Benjy Washy, look here!" said Mrs. Smith, elevating her voice. Angela trod on Mrs. Smith's toe, who made a face, turned red, and became thoughtful.

"Papa," exclaimed Angela, "allow me to present Mr. Carlton, the friend of the Boston Browns."

Smith bowed, and, deprived of his nap, turned his attention to the weather, which he discussed in the potential mood —might, could, or should be.

"It is, indeed, a lovely period of the year. Do you not think so?" said Carlton, turning to the youngest of the ladies.

"My dorter Soosan," replied Mrs. Smith. "This 'ere is my oldest, Angela."

"Or Angular, as you often call her," remarked Smith, laughing.

"Papa!" said Angela, "you should not pun on people's names: they might not like it."

"You may take any liberties you like with my name, pa," interposed the young girl. "Call me' Susan, Sue, Sooky, or Sook."

"Are you going to stop at the White Mountains, Mr. Carlton?" inquired Angela.

"Yes; just to see them; and then I go on to Montreal, and stay there a day or two, and thence to Niagara Falls."

"Just the tower we air going to take," exclaimed Mrs. Smith. "When we've seen everything in Ameriky, we air a-going to France and the other hemispheres across the great pond."

"Mamma, how facetious you are," said Angy, pretending to laugh, though much mortified.

"I expect there air some people of our name in France," continued Mrs. Smith, "I hope so, Mr. Carrollong; for B. W. wants to get a shirt of arms to put on the panier outside our carriage."

"Mamma, mamma, you mean a *coat* of arms," said Angy.

"Well, whichever it air, it's funny enough to have um made all arms. Our motter is going to be 'Hail Columby, happy land!' though I shouldn't like to live there if it always hails."

"I quite agree with you, mamma," laughed Susan. "Why should it not snow or rain Columbia?"

Carlton was perplexed. The ignorance of Mrs. Smith, the chagrin of Angy, and the mirth of Susan, would have

afforded him amusement at any other time. But he was not in a merry mood.

Dusk had given place to night, and Carlton, drawing their attention to this, feared that they would find difficulty in obtaining accommodation, as there were very few hotels in the place.

They arrived, with many other travellers, late at night; and as Carlton had surmised, in this secluded and mountainous region the good, old, steady habits of the "Puritan Fathers" are still cherished; and on demanding admittance at an hotel, the party were informed by the landlord, that unless such persons as represented themselves to be married could produce their marriage certificate, he would not allow them to share the same room, nor could he accommodate them with separate apartments!

"Good gracious!" cried Smith. "I've been married to Mrs. Smith these forty years, and of course don't carry the certificate about me."

"No matter where it is," sternly replied the painfully virtuous landlord, "if you can't produce it, to prove that you are lawfully man and wife, you can't be accepted as such under my roof."

"But there's not another hotel for miles, and it's midnight besides. Think of my daughters," urged Smith.

"How am I to know that they *are* your legitimate offspring?" inquired the man.

Carlton's patience was exhausted by such injustice and insolence, and interposing, he threatened "to publish the house from Maine to Georgia if all were not instantly provided with rooms, marriage certificates or no certificates."

A wholesome fear of the press induced the churlish landlord to open his doors to them. When the sisters had retired to their room, Angy said,—

"Sue, if it should ever be my fate to marry and have a home of my own, that Mr. Carlton is the man of all others whom I should prefer, if allowed a choice in the matter of a husband."

CHAPTER XII.

NIAGARA.

WHEN Jed was on the eve of leaving New York for the South, there to carry out certain little plans which have already been explained, a cheque was given to him, payable at Wilson and Brothers' Bank, Boston, in which town he was at the time. The cheque was for the sum of three thousand dollars. The figure 3 was so carelessly made at top, that Jed thought it a pity not to correct it. A single dash of the pen converted the 3 into a 5, and by ingeniously altering the word three to five, the forgery was not suspected until Judkins was lost in the secret mazes of the underground railway.

Relying on his assumed name, and the protecting influence of the society of which he was the active agent, Jed returned to New York after a few months' sojourn in the sunny South. He boldly took rooms at the most public hotel, was seen, apprehended, and taken to Boston to be tried.

Jed in prison is a different man from the gay, fascinating Jed of the St. Nicholas Hotel. What little beard he has grows in neglected patches, instead of being neatly trimmed. The curl has deserted his hair since he has abandoned the hair-dresser, and falls long and uncombed over an unbrushed coat. With clothes soiled, eyes bloodshot, face pale, and air dejected and sullen, with folded arms he leans against a little bed, looking intently at a man who balances himself on the back legs of the chair on which he sits.

This man's countenance would create disgust in any breast : his face, corpse-like in its pallor ; his thin blue lips

tightly drawn over slightly projecting teeth, which were partly concealed by a coarse mustache; his hair falling off in places. But the worst feature of this repulsive, cruel face was, that one eye leered maliciously, while the lid of the other was drawn down at the outer, and up at the inner-corner, half concealing the immovable pupil, which was closely turned in against the nose. As the son of a butcher he inherited an indifference to suffering, and his murderous disposition early showed itself in the slow torture of insects. Arrived at manhood, he deserted the sanguinary shambles to become the most unscrupulous and hardened of all criminal lawyers, and in the pursuit of business we now find him in close conference with the depraved Jed.

Felun—so let him be called—was evidently lost in thought, while Jed gazed anxiously on his face. To use his own phrase, he had just “made a clean breast of it” to the lawyer, and was awaiting from his blue, twitching mouth the fiat of his fate.

“Well,” said Jed, at length breaking the silence, “what do you think of my case?”

“Why, you see,” he answered slowly, “it’s awk’ard.”

“I know that much myself, Mr. Felun.”

“We might swear it off on the fellow who gave you the cheque, only, you see, *he* didn’t pocket the money. If you hadn’t run away, it would not look so black for you.”

“We’ve gone over all that,” said Jed impatiently.

“Why, so we have,” returned Felun, with a cunning leer; “but it just struck me that, as you’re used to sloping——”

“What then?”

“That *Kansas* is a pretty place, and plenty of work going for abolitionists with youth and pluck.”

“Yes?”

“Change of air would do *you* good, no doubt: you don’t look well.”

“Curse me if I am not sick of *this hole*,” said Jed, striding up and down like a caged lion.

"That's just what I thought ; so if you could only bring your system down by a little physic."

"What ! sham sick ?"

"Yes ; and I'll send a doctor to you : he's a good friend of mine."

"But what end will it answer ?"

"Just this : the case is doubtful at present ; and it would be inconvenient to be kept in confinement while the prosecuting party is getting up the proofs strong against you."

"No doubt."

"So that if you should fall sick of a fever, or any other ailment which imprisonment would be fatal to, it would be an additional reason why the judge should admit you to bail."

The two men had gradually dropped their voices until they whispered.

"I see, I see," said Jed.

"But how to get bail, *that's* the difficulty," continued Felun.

"Pshaw ! Money will buy anything ; and you know Macpherson's gambling saloon ?"

"Yes, very well."

"He's driving a thriving trade, and he will come down for a few cool thousands, for I set him up, and still have an interest in the business."

"All right," said Felun, putting his mouth to Jed's ear ; "then you can *make tracks to Kansas*."

"Leg bail ?"

"*Exactly*," answered the attorney, rising and stretching himself ; then, with a knowing nod to Jed, he left the prison.

After the lawyer's exit, Jed took up his old position, half standing against, half sitting on, the bed, with folded arms, knitted brows, and compressed lips. Here, for the present, let us leave him, and turn to newer friends, happier faces, and purer hearts.

Leaving Montreal, after a very brief sojourn, the Smith

family, still accompanied by Carlton, arrived at the Suspension Bridge, Niagara Falls, and drove to the Clifton House on the Canadian side. This house commands a fine view of the Falls, being directly opposite them. It is a large building, with tiers of balconies running around it; and the apartments opening on these balconies are much sought for the constant sight of the Falls which they afford. The Smiths engaged a suite of rooms on the first balcony. Carlton, like all bachelors who don't mind stairs, was forced to retreat to the highest story.

It was twilight when they arrived; and after an hour or two of repose, Carlton proposed to the ladies that he should row them over the Niagara river, adding that the effect produced by the Falls was much grander when seen from underneath than when looking down on them. Carlton was an expert oarsman; and as he assured the ladies that he knew the river well, and how to avoid the eddies, they trusted themselves to his care. Carefully descending the precipice leading to the river, Carlton unmoored a boat, and handing them in, quickly rowed close to the American Fall.

"Here let us rest a moment," said he. "It is a lovely night, and from this safe distance you can feel the spray on your faces."

"What a magnificent scene!" said Angy.

"Oh, look at that star!" cried Susan. "As our boat recedes, that single star seems to shoot up out of the water!"

"How splendid those large rocks look, casting long shadows on the silvery stream," remarked Angy. "I half expect to see some painted warrior dart from among those jagged mountain tops, and, with a shrill war-whoop, sound defiance to us pale-faced intruders on this gloomy river."

"No fear of that," answered Carlton: "the red man shrinks from the busy hum of civilization. He falls back to the distant wilderness, and seeks the companionship of nature. To him there are 'books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything' but the specu-

lative American and his destroying fire-water. But here, ladies, the current is very strong, and were we to advance many strokes farther, we should, no doubt, be caught in the eddy and drowned."

"What a romantic fate!" said Angy, sighing sentimentally.

"I don't hanker after it," remarked Mrs. Smith. "Sha'n't we go back? for I'm tired, and have had enough of the moon for one night. 'Taint half so fine as the Boryaury-alice."

"As what, ma?" inquired Susan archly.

"The Aurybory——"

"The Aurora Borealis you mean, mamma, I suppose," said Angy, biting her lip, and frowning at her mother.

They returned to the hotel. Carlton, since the strange love for Amanda had sprung up in his heart, was often silent. Formerly he was full of that light and amusing conversation so pleasing to the fair sex: now he was dull and reserved. In spite of this, he had created a favourable impression on one of the Smith sisters, as will be seen by the following conversation, which took place when the door of their bed-room closed upon them for the night:—

"Angy, Angy," said Susan joyfully, "Frank will be here to-morrow! just think of it. How I do love him, to be sure! and he writes that Mr. Grey, his father's partner, is coming with him on a visit. They are going to stay a fortnight; so I shall be happy for that time at least. Do you know, Angy, that I half suspect Mr. Grey is coming to see you? Last winter I thought he had taken a fancy to you."

"Did you really, Sue?" inquired Angy, her grim features relaxing into a smile: "he never hinted it to me. But if he had proposed *then*, I should have accepted him: *now*, of course, matters are changed; for, as I have said before, if it should ever be my fate to marry, and have a home of my own, Mr. Carlton is the man of all others whom I should prefer, if allowed a choice in the matter of a husband, and

not forced to take up with any one, just to avoid being an old maid."

"Angy, I wish you would put Mr. Carlton out of your head."

"Why so, Susy?"

"My word for it, he will never marry either of *us*."

"Why not—why not?" Angy inquired anxiously. "For if it ever *should* be my fate to marry, and have——"

"Yes, Angy," interrupted Susan; "you've said that *often* before. Carlton's too proud to ally himself with *our* family. When ma makes some of her dreadful mistakes, I've noticed his lip curl with scorn; and as if aware of it himself, and fearful that it should wound, he has turned away to conceal it; and I really believe that if it should ever come to his knowledge that pa made his money by the soap and candle, that is, the grocer business, he'd cut us all."

"Ah, Sue!" said Angy, sighing, "that's always to be our drawback in life. It does not so much matter to you, because you are young and pretty, and we *are* rich now; but when I was your age we were still poor, and, of course, I had no opportunity of meeting gentlemen, and so did not marry. Now that we are wealthy, and can see plenty of people, why, I am old and no longer attractive, and it seems to me that I shall *never* get a husband."

"Come, come, Angy, while there is life there is hope. Don't despair; you have a good education——"

"Yes; but I should not have had, only that common schools abound in our country. But I only received *common* instruction; you, all the accomplishments that wealth can bestow."

"Still, Angy, a good ordinary education is not to be despised. How we should prize it in ma!"

"Yes; if it were not for her we should get on very well, for pa *has* sense enough to be quiet before strangers. But ma will talk, and there's no stopping her. I declare, Sue, she sometimes mortifies me so before Mr. Carlton that I almost bite my lip in two."

"I don't mind it, Angela," replied Susan, "but I *do* dislike your trying to appear above our former condition—that's a sin which brings its punishment along with it. We have to thank the store for making us what we are; and if you would not scold so dreadfully, I should say to every new acquaintance, 'Papa's a retired grocer, and mamma is such an enemy to everything English, that she does her best to drive from our republican country the remnant of the language bequeathed to us by his most ungracious Majesty George the Third.' After knowing what *we* are, our friends need not have anything to do with us, that's all."

"If we should drag the grocer business forward, we should never get into society."

"I should not mind."

"No; because you have plenty of admirers whether you will or not; but for me, whose fate it seems never to marry—"

"What a splendid night!" interrupted Susan, going to the window.

"You're not attending to me, Sue—that I should marry—"

"Suppose we go to bed, Angy?"

"And have a home of my own—"

"We can hear the Falls plainly, even with the door shut," said Susan, determined to end the conversation; and having quickly undressed herself, she now, like a frolicsome madcap, took aim at the bed and leaped into it. Though not asleep, she snored, not so much in the belief that she was deceiving Angy, as by way of intimating to her that she was averse to hearing anything further.

Under these circumstances Angy was driven to continue her thoughts silently. Twisting her hair in curl-papers before the glass, she said to herself, "If I *should* ever marry, and have a snug, comfortable home of my own, no matter how small, so it *was* my own, and Mr. Carlton *should* ever propose (which it is quite time he did, if he intends to do it at all), though it would be hard to resign all this going about,

which no doubt is very pleasant, still I should cheerfully submit to my fate. What a slow fellow he is, to be sure; for if he *is* fond of me, what's to hinder him from saying so at once, and put me out of suspense? It is true we have never yet been alone together; but now that Frank Waters is coming, Susan will be forced to leave us a little to ourselves. I must give ma a hint; and if ever he comes to the point I shall be a happy woman." And Angy pursued her meditations until sleep overtook and conquered for a time even her "ruling passion."

Angela Smith was entering her thirty-fifth year. Small in stature, and very stout, she looked like a large woman cut short; her teeth resembled brads of different sizes driven irregularly into her head; her complexion dry, yellow, and coarse. The most expensive feminine Parisian fashions were bought to subdue her inevitable ugliness; but in vain! Nature, in the publication, had spoiled the frontispiece, and this was unalterable until Angela's book of life should go through another, and let us hope, a corrected edition in the next world.

When Carlton bade the ladies Good night, he went to his room, and, unable to sleep, he brought a chair and sat down upon the balcony to enjoy the midnight grandeur of the Falls, lit up by a full moon. As the night wore on, Carlton still sat there absorbed in dreams and recollections. Young, sensitive, ardent, and poetical, he found it impossible to banish Amanda altogether from his heart; for though he might forget her during the day, amid the bustle and excitement of travel, yet when alone, at moments such as these, her form *would* rise up before him, and the conjectures as to where she was, and if *he* were still remembered, even the beauty of the changing scenes of his roving life, which he sighed to think she could never share, all served to feed an eternal flame. For what can equal, even to a man, the fresh fervour of a first love? what more hopeless than its reaction?

These were Carlton's thoughts, even while Angela was trusting to receive from him a proposition of marriage. Ah!

could man invent a mirror truthfully to reflect his fellow-creature's mind—could each, at will, interrogate the other's soul—much confusion and misapprehension might be spared.

And could Angela have carried a glass of this kind in her fan, and, unobserved, have obtained a faithful glance of what was lying deeply embedded in Carlton's heart, she would have seen that it was a fairer female form than hers, and her vision of a home of which he should be the master and her husband, would have melted away like the now fading moon before the coming day at the beautiful spray-flinging Falls of Niagara.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHICAGO.

AMANDA had been a fortnight with Minnie at her brother's house in Toledo.

Amanda's nature was docile and trusting; and having always led a guileless, religious life, she did not rebel nor murmur under sorrow, but accepted it as part of woman's lot. She saw the good around her, and was grateful that it threw its radiant beams over her own life; she therefore strove to be contented, if she could not be happy.

Minnie's character was bolder and more self-reliant than Amanda's. Whatever circumstances demanded, Minnie seemed to possess some latent quality which instantly sprang forth fully formed in answer. The mistress of a moderate fortune, achieved by her own exertions, Minnie would have adopted the young girl; but Amanda resolutely refused to be dependent even on so good a friend.

Minnie's brother having ascertained that a junior teacher was wanted in one of the public schools in Chicago, made application for the situation in Amanda's name. In order to undergo an examination for it, Amanda prepared herself to leave Toledo and the hospitable Minnie.

The evening prior to her departure, they were sitting in the drawing-room, a well-furnished, cozy apartment, taking tea, that most domestic of all meals.

Amanda fell into a fit of abstraction.

"Don't be gloomy," said Minnie gaily: "you know it's against the rules of the house."

"But I can't help it, Minnie, when I think that it may be

the last night I may ever sit here, and that I may never see you again ; and then to travel alone for the first time ! ”

“ Your travels have been very great, I believe, Amanda,” said Minnie, laughing : “ from that stiff, stuck-up little Southern town by boat to New York, thence by rail to Toledo, Ohio.”

“ I wonder if I shall be accepted, Minnie ! ”

“ If you are not, you must do as that French king did—march up the hill and then march back again. I believe it was his chief exploit; certainly his most celebrated.”

“ I hope I shall not resemble him as far as being defeated goes.”

“ Should you remain, you will not find Chicago such a *very* desirable place for a residence. It is always on bad terms with the weather: therefore, when it doesn’t snow, it rains and continually blows, while hail-storms occur at the most unexpected times; midsummer, for example.”

“ Indeed! well, it will not matter much if I am the greater part of the day in school.”

“ The pavements are composed of single planks put down lengthways. It is a trying moment when people meet face to face on these boards, as one *must* step aside to let the other pass; and the aristocracy of the town is defined by this act. Naturally, the first families will not move out of the way of the second, and the third families stand on the right which democracy accords them—that of believing themselves as good as the best—and they will not give way. In short, such enmity has arisen in consequence of these planks, that very few of the inhabitants are on a friendly footing.”

“ I should think not,” replied Amanda, laughing.

“ A fact, I assure you. The dry-goodsman will not speak to the grocer, the grocer looks scornfully on the boot-maker, and the bootmaker scowls on the barber. And when these antagonists find themselves ‘en face’ on the boards, they stand in speechless determination not to yield. Sometimes the planks settle the dispute (as well as settle themselves), as regards the right of way, by suddenly tipping up,

and unexpectedly precipitating some member of a high family into a pool of water, and splashing mud into the eyes and over the victorious enemy. When the almanack says that there will be a moon, the lamps are not lit; and if that luminous, but sometimes obstinate orb, fails to appear at the appointed time, the town is left in utter darkness. At best the gas is no sooner lit than it is blown out, or rained out, or the lamp-post is thrown over by the wind; which element is so strong that the magistrate told me that once, when running home—an undignified proceeding, but, perhaps, warranted by the occasion—to get out of the wind, it tore his coat-tails off. The people, knowing what will probably be the fate of gas, carry lanterns, and civilities only take place when they stop to request lucifers of each other. You must always wrap up well, for there is often a fog, and there is an indigenous fever. The sun has a habit of coming out for a short time and scorching people, and then going in, leaving them to freeze. Night is made hideous by swarms of mosquitoes, malicious flies, malignant spiders, and flying and creeping insects of all descriptions; to say nothing of bats and cats, that seem always to select the immediate vicinity of *your* window as their nocturnal head-quarters."

"A charming prospect for me, Minnie!"

"Oh! good gracious, Amanda! I never thought of that: however, you must not be discouraged. Of course you will have to go to an hotel. There is but one of any consequence in the place. But as there are families usually living in all hotels, you will not be without female society. And my brother will take you to Chicago; for I could not bear to see you go alone, even though it is not far."

"When do you leave for Europe, Minnie?"

"In about six weeks, I think. The Warehams are only waiting for me."

Here the conversation ended, and the next day, after many affectionate adieus, the friends embraced and parted.

Amanda, immediately after her arrival in Chicago, presented herself as a candidate for the vacant situation, and,

after a brief examination, was pronounced competent to teach female infants the alphabet and primer, and was accepted.

The common schools of America are generally divided into six rooms, three of which are apportioned to boys and three to girls. In each room there are two teachers, a principal and an assistant. As the pupils improve they are raised from the lower to the upper school-rooms.

Amanda entered at once upon her duties, for which her amiability peculiarly fitted her; and she soon found that nothing more surely dispels regret and sad remembrance than an active, fully-occupied, and useful life. How quickly she learned to love the little children! During the half-hour set apart for their recreation, instead of conversing with the other teacher, she would trip down to the play-ground, and watch their youthful sports. As their innocent cries rang out on the clear air, as they tossed the ball and battledoor, their freshness and their careless buoyancy recalled sweet scenes of Amanda's own vanished girlhood, over which but one shadow hung; and she now owned that the many nameless little acts of love unostentatiously performed by Mrs. Lane, had made her *home* a sunny and a hallowed memory for ever.

"Play on, play on, ye happy children!" she murmured, "heedless of the future, which will surely bring grief to many of you. Ah! that you might never lose the purity and the joy of childhood!"

And then the loud, sharp school-bell would arouse Amanda from her pensiveness, and soon, amid the hum of little voices and the tramp of little feet, she would experience a delight unknown since, a little child herself, she knelt at Mammie's knee and said her daily prayer.

The head teacher in Amanda's room was a young and lovely woman. Her form was tall, full, and stately; her complexion a clear olive, with cheeks just tinged with crimson, and lips recalling the spring-time—redolent of roses. Her eyes were dark and brilliant; and as the light fell on

the silken black hair, it seemed like a moonbeam darting on ebony. In manner she was self-possessed and engaging, while her voice was strangely fascinating in its soft melody. With attractions such as these, no wonder that Amanda, whose heart ever yearned to love and to inspire love, turned to Agnes Fairlock, and expended a wealth of tenderness upon her.

Agnes appeared to reciprocate this feeling, and easily induced Amanda to engage a drawing-room in conjunction with her. Thus living at the same hotel, they shared the same bed-room, which had one door leading out into the passage, and another into the pretty little drawing-room. Here the new friends sat when the duties of the day were over, or, if they had a few moments of leisure, they walked together in the village.

Having been to church in the morning, they wandered forth to walk towards the close of a Sabbath afternoon. The sun was setting in all the crimson glory of an American sky, throwing, on the grass, long shadows of people issuing from the village church. Amanda paused with a sigh.

"Stay, Agnes," she said: "see, what splendour in the heavens! what solemn quietude on earth! Let us observe those people."

"Amanda," replied Fairlock, "do you know I sometimes fancy that you are not happy?"

"I do not repine, Agnes, but I am not quite happy," she replied.

"I know why," answered Fairlock, laughing lightly. "You love some one above your station. I know by that deep blush that I am right. Come, tell me who it is, and all about it."

"Do not urge me, Agnes, to reveal a secret which preys upon my mind, and embitters many a moment of my life. But look: the last, slow, aged footstep has left the church. On the tempestuous sea of life, buoyed up by religion, how happy that poor feeble creature seems; and yet she must soon resign this world, and enter upon the terrible uncertainty of another."

" You appear more miserable about it than she does, I must say, Amanda. But you *will* sermonize, and insist on making a wet blanket of yourself, to damp the gaiety of all about you."

No sooner were these words spoken than Amanda uttered a slight scream, and pressing her hands upon her eyes, seemed about to faint.

" What's the matter? Are you ill?" inquired Fairlock quickly.

" It is nothing of consequence. I fancied that a familiar face passed me as we turned the corner. It must have been imagination; but indeed, Agnes, it appeared so real, that for the moment it bewildered me. Pray speak no more of it."

In silence the friends returned to the hotel. Amanda remained oppressed by a sadness which the liveliness of Fairlock failed to dispel.

CHAPTER XIV.

A POET.

WHILE this scene was taking place, the events which must now be related had actually occurred.

On the day dedicated to the arrival of Frank Waters and Mr. Grey, Susan and Angela Smith gazed anxiously from the balcony until the coach set down its precious freight. Upon this the ladies ran back into the drawing-room, merely to see if their "hair was tidy," and then waited until the gentlemen should appear. Due time and attention having been given to the toilets of the dusty travellers, they presented themselves to the Smith family. It was near the dinner hour, and Carlton, who usually took the ladies down, was also announced.

Mrs. Smith wore a black *moiré*, Angela a silver-grey, Susan a pink *glacé* silk. A tall blonde, with large blue eyes and shining golden hair ornamented by a black velvet coronet studded with diamonds, Susan looked lovely enough to win even Carlton's heart, had he never seen Amanda.

When they were all seated at the dinner-table, Angy glanced at Waters: he was a short, square-faced, flaxen-haired youth, fat, fair, and foolish: then at Grey: he was a well-kept man of fifty, of exceedingly dignified, it may be pompous, air. The only peculiarity of his appearance was that his hair was white and his whiskers black. Evidently he had dyed his whiskers and forgotten his hair, or bleached his hair and forgotten his whiskers. Angy's eye next rested upon Carlton's noble form, and aristocratic, manly face, and she said to herself,—

"If it ever should be my fate to marry—not for the sake of a home (which, as Susy says, I have already, and a very good one too)—that man is the man of all others whom I should prefer, if allowed a choice."

"This is my first sight of the Falls, Miss Susan," said Waters. "You can't think how I was affected by it. I was so powerfully weak I could hardly stand. I would have written some lines on it, only everything is so done up and run into the ground. Whenever I read Shakspeare I get right mad."

Susan inquired the reason.

"Because I can't see," he replied, "why *he* should have gone off and used up everything. A fellow can't write a thing nowadays but they set up a roar, and say it's hooked from Shakspeare."

"I should not have thought that in *your* case," said Susan.

"Fact, though. Only the other day I sent a lovely tale to a fool of an editor, and he had to confess it was beautiful; only I stole it from Dickens, he said, and he wouldn't publish it. Now, is it not hard that, merely because I happened to be born after him, he mopped up all my thoughts before—"

"Before you had them?" inquired Susan.

"Look at Grey!" he said, changing the subject. "He's struck."

"Who with?"

"Angy."

"'Pon your word?"

"Yes: he's come to propose to her; and if she refuses, he's going to hang himself."

"What with, Frank?"

"A piece of old twine, I suppose; I didn't ask him. She had better not give him the sack, for he's one of our first families. Sue, how many scalps have you taken since I saw you?"

"About a million, I should think."

"Oh, come, I don't believe *that*. Did you take them clean off?"

"Clean."

"I won't have any fellers dangling after you while I'm here, Miss Smith. We've been engaged six months, and in six months more you will be Mrs. Frank Waters. Won't it sound nice? Frank Waters is a lovely name, and I could write Poet after it, if that old humbug Shakspeare had not gone off and run everything into the ground. Is that a beau of yours, playing the agreeable to your ma?"

"No; that's Mr. Carlton, a gentleman from Boston."

"What's he do for a living, Susan?"

"I don't know. Mamma asked him, and he said he had not made up his mind to enter any profession. But what's the matter?" she continued: "you are not eating."

"No; the pleasure of seeing you has taken away my appetite."

"Do eat a little," said Susan.

"I can't."

"Try."

"I can't indeed, Sue."

"Just a little tiny morsel, Frank."

"If you must know the truth, Susy, I've been eating in the cars all the way from Buffalo; and I am so chock full that I could not worry down another mouthful if I were to stand up and jump."

"Frank!" said Susan, "you are an unromantic fellow, and I shall never speak to you again."

"Why not?" inquired Frank, thoroughly astonished.

"Because you said you could not eat for the pleasure of seeing me. That was one of your compositions, I suppose."

"A poet's licence, Susy."

"A poet's nonsense, Frank. Don't speak to me again."

Susan turned away, pouting, and preserved silence and her offended air until dinner was over.

Life at Niagara Falls is much the same as at other fashionable watering-places: the principal amusements are dressing and flirting. They dress, and drive to the Whirlpool in the morning; return and dress for dinner, which is early; dress again, and ride with the most favoured party to the Burning Springs. *De retour* they sit on the balconies, and flirt till evening; then dress again for a "hop" at their own or some neighbouring hotel. After which they flirt an hour or two longer in the brilliantly-lighted drawing-rooms, while some foolish person sings or plays for the benefit of a crowd of strangers who do not listen.

In the evening Susan chatted with Grey, and waltzed with Carlton, refusing to speak to Frank until he was half mad with rage and jealousy. Subduing these, and hoping to soften her heart, when the night was far advanced, and even the frivolous Susan forgot her cruel triumph in sleep, Frank took his flute, and went to the balcony where the Smith family had rooms. He began his serenade with "The heart that has truly loved."

"What's that?" said Angy, waking Susan.

They listened.

"Some one playing a flute! I believe it's that Frank. Get up, Angy, and tell him to go away."

"The heart that has truly loved" suddenly changed into "Home, sweet home!"

Susan jumped out of bed, and putting her lips to the keyhole, said,—

"Who's that?"

"Frank, dear Susy. I forgive your cruel conduct, and I've come to serenade you." And again the strains of "Home, sweet home!" floated on the air.

"Go away, Frank," cried Susan loudly, rattling the door. "You bore me: go away."

"Yes, sir," said another female voice from the adjoining room (and thereupon the head of Mrs. Smith was seen at the door, half-buried in the frills of a nightcap); "if you air so fond of your sweet home, sir," she continued, in a pee-

visi tone, "you better go to it, sir, and not come here jeoparding my dorthers' reputation at this hour of the night."

Thus appealed to, the disconsolate Frank retired to his room, which was over Susan's, and by dint of pacing the floor until morning, as effectually disturbed her rest as if he had continued to serenade her.

The next morning Carlton sent up his card to Angela, requesting a few moments' *private* conversation with her.

"Sue, Sue!" she exclaimed, "he's going to propose at last: I know it, I feel it. How shall I get through it?" Without waiting for a reply, she hurried into the drawing-room, and greeted him with confused cordiality. Carlton seemed a little embarrassed.

"I hope you will pardon," he said, "my requesting a private interview when you learn the object of my visit."

She simpered, and fixed her eye upon the unoffending tongs. He continued,—

"I must say that it is of such a nature that I hardly know how to begin."

Angy blushed, and sought to answer, but her voice failed her completely.

"Therefore, Miss Smith, if I am abrupt, I trust you will attribute it to the awkwardness which I feel in undertaking such a thing for the first time in my life."

"Oh yes—no—certainly," she stammered, painfully confused.

"You are aware," he said in a mysterious tone—"in fact, it is no secret to anybody—that a *certain* gentleman entertains a very strong regard for a *certain* lady."

"No," she answered, hesitating; "I was not aware that any one suspected it but myself."

"That is strange, Miss Smith. However, whether people see it or not is not to the point. Well, to continue: this gentleman, as I said before, feeling such a tender sort of an affection for this lady, is naturally very unhappy at certain

little misunderstandings which have arisen; as you know such things *will* occur in the best regulated families."

"No doubt," said Angy.

"Well, this gentleman," he continued.

"I wish he would speak in the first person," thought Angy.

"Being so very unhappy, wishes very naturally——"

"Of course," interposed Angy in her blandest tone.

"To bring matters to a close, Miss Smith."

"Quite right, too," she said decidedly.

"You would not believe that he was so miserable last night that he walked the floor till morning."

"Yes, I would," she said to herself; "for I heard him, and thought it was that fool of a Frank."

"After such a night you will readily understand—as I see your disposition is sympathetic—that he could not know peace until he had confided the whole affair—the *pro et con*—to an acquaintance, I may say friend; for though I have known him but a short time, it is evident that Waters is a good fellow."

"So," said Angy to herself, "if he has told Frank all about it, he can't go back from what he has said."

"We came to the conclusion that it would be the wisest thing to consult *you* on the matter; for if we could only gain your consent to the little affair, we are sure of our man; or, rather, if you will pardon such an expression, I should say, sure of our *woman*." And Carlton laughed and looked significantly.

"Well!" thought Angy, a little offended, "I never had a proposal before, but I didn't think this was the most approved way. If it were not that I am so anxious to marry and have a home of my own, I should let him see that he is not so sure of his woman as he thinks."

"The upshot of the whole affair is this," he said, drawing his chair close to her and dropping his voice; "that we are going to arrange a riding party for this afternoon, and Waters wished me to come to you and see if you would be

kind enough to use your influence with your sister, and induce her to accompany him, and at the same time ascertain if you would ride with me ; that is," he continued hastily, fearing that he was not only rude, but exposing the whole plan, "I was *anxious* that you should ride with me. I hope you will not refuse, because, you see, that being engaged, we thought that one sister would hardly like to go without the other."

A beam of happiness flushed Angy's face as she replied,—

" Of course, under the circumstances, Susan could hardly refuse to go for *my sake*."

" Just so; just what Waters said. We thought of asking Mr. Grey to join us ; but unless you particularly wish it—"

" Certainly not, Mr. Carlton ; on no account."

" Perhaps, as a friend of yours, you would sooner he would go ?"

She shook her head.

" Does Mrs. Smith ride ? "

" There's not a horse in the neighbourhood would bear her weight."

" In that case we had better not ask Grey ; for, as Waters says, he can't see a mile-post until he stumbles over it, and as Frank wants to be alone with Miss Susan—excuse my speaking plainly."

" I prefer it by all means, Mr. Carlton."

" At what hour, then," said Carlton, rising to go, " shall we order the horses ? "

" At three."

" Thanks. Oh!—I nearly forgot it—here's a note which Waters gave me for Miss Susan. Would you kindly—"

" Oh, I'll deliver it with pleasure," she said, taking it.

Carlton offered his hand ; she extended hers ; he shook it, and in a moment was gone ; gone ! leaving her in a delicious trance. Her head reeled ; her frame shook. With difficulty she tottered into Susan's room, and dropping into a chair, cried,—

"Bathe my forehead."

"What's the matter?" inquired Sue, slapping her back as if she had swallowed something the wrong way.

"Be quiet, Susan," said Angy, smarting under the vigorous blows. "You've taken leave of your senses to beat me in that manner."

"Why did you frighten me, then?"

"Sue," exclaimed Angy, starting up, "my prayer is answered at length."

"What do you mean?"

"I'm going to have a home of my own."

"I do not understand you, Angela."

"I'm engaged."

"Nonsense."

"I tell you, Susan, I am engaged, and to Mr. Carlton, who, as I've always said, if I ever should have a choice in the matter of a husband, I should prefer above all other men."

"Angy, are you sure there is no mistake? Did Mr. Carlton actually propose to you?"

"Well, Susan, you are so matter-of-fact. He did not say in so many words, Miss Smith, will you marry me? But he talked of a *certain* gentleman's affection, meaning himself, of course—who else could he mean?—asked me to ride with him this afternoon, and spoke of being engaged. What more could a man do? And what am I to infer but that it was a roundabout way of proposing?"

"It certainly looks like it," answered Susan musingly.

"But don't say a word about it to any one, Sue; above all, not to Mr. Grey."

"Why not, Angy?"

"Because you say Frank told you that Grey came here to make me an offer."

"Yes. Well?"

"It would be just as well, Sue, not to let the engagement be known just at present, because, in case anything *should* happen to break it off, I should have Mr. Grey to fall back upon."

Susan laughed.

"What are you laughing at, Sue?"

"It seems to me that you and I are changing characters : you are going to be the flirt, I the old maid."

"Old maid, indeed, Miss Susan! I shall have as nice a home and husband of my own as you will."

"I've a great mind," said Susan, laughing heartily, "to take up Grey myself, and so keep him in a good humour, in case you should ever want him to fall back upon."

"Do as you please ; only I think you might consent to go with us this afternoon."

"Consent ! why, I have never been asked."

"Oh yes ; there's an invitation for *you* too ; and Carlton made me promise that I would reconcile you and Frank."

Susan pouted.

"Come now, Sue, I'm sure you won't let any little pique against him stand in the way of my getting a good husband."

"Angy, to please you, I'll be friendly with Frank ; though you can't tell how I enjoy a little quarrel with him. His misery delights me above all things."

"Here is a note he sends you through my intended."

Susan took it. It was superscribed, "To the lovely S. S." Opening it, Susan read aloud the following lines :—

"When you and I,
And nobody by,
Were whisp'ring in the lane"—

I wonder if he means the balcony last night," said Susan—

"I little recked
I should be decked
With marks of your father's cane.'

That's an allusion to ma's nightcap, I suppose.

'And now despair
Bedews my hair'—

That's a new sort of hair-wash—

‘ And saddens my very life,
The while I cry,
Not knowing why,
“ Wilt thou not be my wife ? ” ’

Not just yet, Master Frank : I like my liberty too well.”
She continued reading :—

“ ‘ Ah ! do not say,
“ Frank, go away ; ”
For, should you thus behave,
In grim despair
I tear my hair,
And totter to my grave.’ ”

This poetical effusion afforded the utmost amusement to the heartless Susan, until three o'clock came, and the horses were brought to the door. Fully equipped for riding, she nimbly sprang into her saddle. With many inward misgivings, Angy allowed herself to be hoisted, by Carlton, up into hers.

The riding party had been proposed by Carlton, to afford Frank an opportunity of talking alone with Susan ; for Mrs. Smith seldom permitted the sisters to ride or drive alone with gentlemen ; but when they went *together*, it was unexceptionable, she thought.

“ Of course, Waters,” Carlton had said, “ you can't say anything in a carriage with Angela ; it's so awkward to make love before a third party ; so, if you like, I'll ask her to ride with me ; and while you and Susan wander off to look at the scenery, I'll keep Angy in conversation.”

This was disinterested of Carlton, but excessively inconvenient for Waters, who had never been on a horse in his life. He felt his inexperience deeply, when, after making three or four futile attempts to mount, he was obliged to lead the horse to the rear of the house, and call in the aid of a man-servant to help him on. Accomplishing this, he returned in triumph to the party, who were awaiting him, and they slowly started on their way. Susan and Frank

went ahead, Susan taking secret delight in trotting, which set the example to Frank's horse, and caused that gentleman much alarm, as he feared that if the horse could not manage himself, in the event of running away he had nothing to hope for.

Carlton was obliged to keep his animal in a walk to suit Angy, who held the pommel of the saddle, as offering more security than the reins.

"Is not this lane lovely?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered; "it is sweet with blossoming trees interlacing their variegated boughs in the golden sunshine."

"To an American, Miss Smith, who has never been in Europe, Canada possesses a great charm, because it has the appearance of age, and, in this part, decay. Our country is all bustle and excitement; everything is of to-day; our buildings are all of recent date; but here there is quietude. Look at that old dismantled inn, with a half-effaced head of George the Third upon the sign-board, creaking and swinging in the summer breeze. There is no evidence of the past in the States: it is all the busy, active present. But here we turn into a more frequented path. See that squalid Indian, and that stout, listless squaw, vending moccasins and other emblems of uncivilized industry to the gaily-dressed passers-by."

"There's a red-coat!" exclaimed Angy.

"Yes; that looks like England."

"And there's a party of Canadians picnicing in the shade, Mr. Carlton."

"Yes. They will probably take to flight if they see a party of Americans, so much do they dislike our nation. Have you noticed, Miss Smith, that, at the Clifton House, they will not dance in the same quadrille with us?"

"Yes; and is it not strange to see them dance our Virginian Reel, and call it Sir Roger de Coverley?"

"Perhaps they think it equally strange that we should dance their Sir Roger, and call it the Virginian Reel."

They now entered the wooded place overlooking the Whirlpool.

"Oh!" said Susan, gazing a short time at the raging, circling waters. "It is so gloomy. Let us leave these tangled shrubs and stony footpaths." And now, once more in the sunshine, the mind loses the horror of the place, and winding lane, blooming tree, and tiny wild flower resume their imperishable charms. Lovely Niagara! who could speak ill of thee?

"Shall we have a 'brush' together, Miss Susan?" inquired Carlton, thinking he had given Waters a long, uninterrupted interview with her, and quite tired of walking his horse by the side of Angy.

"With pleasure," she replied; and whipping up their horses, they galloped off, and were soon lost to the amazed view of Angy and Frank.

"Well!" Angy exclaimed angrily; "I never saw anything so rude as that. Do you know the way home?"

"No, I do not, and it's getting late."

"I wonder you are not jealous, Frank." She evidently was.

"Do you think I've any cause to be?" he inquired anxiously.

"Susan, you know, is handsome, and all gentlemen fancy her: why should he be an exception to the rule?"

"Take up the reins, Angy, and let's catch up to them."

"If I do take them up I shall slip off behind; and if I let go the pommel I shall fall over his head. Now, just look at this horse! he's going to drag me under this fence, for the sake of getting at that pool of water on the other side. Do get down and pull him back."

Frank dismounted, stepping on the interstices of the fence, and led Angy's docile horse away from the much-coveted water. He then remounted, again making a ladder of the fence. "I'm sure Carlton's in love with Susan," he said.

"Oh dear!" cried Angy, thoroughly alarmed. "But, hush: I see them coming."

Carlton and Susan now rode up.

"Come, Frank," she said, "shall you and I have a race now?"

"No, thank you," he answered coldly.

"Oh, very well, then, you can go home, or wait in the road until Mr. Carlton and I come back."

But Carlton, seeing displeasure expressed in Frank's face, took up the reins of Angy's horse, and placing them in her hand, said,—

"We shall be benighted if we do not return, and your mother will be alarmed."

Angy felt her horse quicken his pace, and saw, with concern, that they were leaving Frank and Susan in the distance.

Left alone, Frank at once accused her of flirting with Carlton. Seeking to convince him that his attentions were only brotherly, Susan informed Frank that Carlton was engaged to be married to Angy. This surprised, but satisfied him, and he readily promised secrecy. Suddenly Susan got down from her horse, gathered up her habit, and throwing it over her arm, ran, whip in hand, to Angy.

"Won't you take my horse, Angy? we shall never get home at this rate. You have only to whip him well, and he will gallop," she said.

"But I don't want him to gallop," replied Angy.

Upon this, Susan, full of merriment, began to whip Angy's horse. As he quickened his pace, Angy grasped the reins tightly, and screamed. Irritated at length, the old horse reared and wheeled round on the brink of the deep precipice which ran along the side of the road. Her back being towards the chasm, Angy did not know her peril, but continued to pull the reins. Carlton, seeing her within a foot of the edge of the abyss, dashed forward, and snatching the reins, dragged the horse back into the path, thus saving the rider from a frightful death.

Susan burst into tears, saying,—

"Mr. Carlton, I can never thank you sufficiently for

having averted so fearful an ending to my thoughtless sport."

"Do not thank me," he replied, "but Another, Miss Susan; and let us so act, that should the angel of the Lord call us away, even in our most trivial moments, we shall not be altogether unprepared!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE END OF ANGY'S DREAM.

"It's very strange, Sue," said Angy to her sister, "that Mr. Carlton never says a word about our engagement; and were it not that that fearful ride remains impressed on my mind as the very day on which he proposed, I should think it all a dream; for he does not act at all like a lover—so different from Frank. He never wants to be alone with me, and never says an endearing word. I *do* wish he would speak a little more plainly. Mr. Grey is very jealous, and he told mamma last night, that he had come to Niagara hoping to win my affections, but that his business in New York needed his presence, and that he would soon leave; so that, as Carlton does not come forward at all, I think I must turn my attention to Grey. But really, Sue, it does seem as if I am never to have a home of my own: at least, I see plainly that I am not going to have a choice in the matter of a husband."

Frank Waters and Grey were strolling in the Clifton House gardens at the very moment Angy resolved to turn her attention to the latter gentleman.

"You're a happy fellow!" said Grey. "Has she named the day?"

"No," replied Frank: "that is what annoys me. She says she will not marry me until they return from Europe; and as they are going to the South before they leave America, I am afraid I shall not be married for eighteen months to come, at the very least."

"Well, Waters, at your age you can afford to wait. At mine it's a different thing. If I were only certain that Angela's affections were given to me, I would wait twice that time."

"Mr. Grey," said Frank, looking at him seriously, "I do not think it is the part of old friends to conceal anything from each other."

"Certainly not; and I have never done so, so far as I am concerned."

"It's not you I'm talking about," said Frank, interrupting him; "it's myself. I have found out something affecting your happiness in life."

"What! that Angy loves me?"

"On the contrary, she loves another, and is engaged to be married."

"Impossible!"

"It's the truth. You remember our riding party? You were not with us; but Carlton, a fine, noble fellow, and appreciates me, paid some little attention to Susy that day, which I instantly called upon her to explain; and she then told me, under promise of secrecy——"

"Of course, of course," said Grey impatiently.

"It must go no further, Grey—that Carlton's attentions were such as a brother might offer a sister; in short, that Angy and he were engaged to be married."

"How very extraordinary, to be sure!" gasped Grey, leaning heavily on Frank's arm.

"I was astonished to hear it myself, because she is so much older than he is," said Frank.

"A young villain!" exclaimed Grey, suddenly bursting into a passion.

"Eh?" said Frank, turning in surprise.

"Yes, a villain, to come and steal away the affections of a woman that I've had my eye on for years. But I'll call him to account for this. I'll—I'll——"

"I say, don't go and get me into a row with Susy; because I promised not to tell, and so did you."

"Don't talk to me, sir. You deceived me, and so did she, and so has that fellow. But I'll call him out." Angered to the last degree, Grey freed himself from Frank's grasp, and rushing into the office, inquired the number of Carlton's room.

"Eighty-two, sir," replied the clerk. "You will be sure to find him there, as he has just gone up."

Grey paused to collect himself, as he wished to be calm at such a meeting. Knocking at Carlton's door, he entered, summoning all his dignity and firmness. Nevertheless, Carlton saw that something extraordinary had occurred, and waited for Grey to state the reason of his visit. Grey said, after a short pause,—

"I should apologise for intruding upon you, sir; but I intend to waive ceremony and come to the point at once. The result of this interview will determine whether you and I are to remain on a friendly footing, or to part eternal enemies."

"I am at a loss to imagine," replied Carlton, "what could cause dissension between two gentlemen who know so little of each other."

"Only this, Mr. Carlton: we both love the same lady."

Carlton stared at him in silent amazement.

"I repeat it, sir," said Grey: "we both love the same lady."

Carlton's memory flew back to Amanda, and he bitterly asked himself whether it could have been for such a man as this that she rejected *him*.

"I fancied, sir," said Grey, with a tone of tenderness in his voice which found an echo in Carlton's heart, "that my affection was returned. Indeed, I was about to make her a proposal of marriage when you came between us."

"Indeed! I was not aware of it. I hoped, I believed firmly, that she loved *me*." So saying, Carlton walked to the window to conceal his emotion.

"Mr. Carlton, I was led to think that you had designedly supplanted me," continued Grey.

"Impossible."

"In that case let me be generous enough to wish you happiness, though at the cost of my own."

"No, no," said Carlton, smiling sadly; "that can never be!"

"Indeed! I thought you were engaged," replied Grey.

"What should make you think so?"

"I heard it, Mr. Carlton."

"In New York, I suppose."

Grey was silent, not wishing to embroil Frank and Susan.

"So," exclaimed Carlton bitterly, "the story is the gossip of New York! Mr. Grey, I assure you that no engagement ever existed between us. I never could get over that unfortunate calling."

"But that's of no consequence now that he has given it up," said Grey.

"He has given it up, then, has he?" inquired Carlton.

"Certainly; and it will soon be forgotten by everybody."

"Not by me, Mr. Grey."

"I think, if you will permit me to say so, that you carry it a little too far—in a democratic country, too. Indeed," he continued, "very few know that her father was a grocer."

Carlton had been walking the floor impatiently. He now stopped and reiterated,—

"Her father a grocer!"

"Yes; and he made a large fortune by it, too."

"Such being the case," replied Carlton, "her brother's taking to gambling and cheating is all the more unpardonable."

"Her brother a gambler!" echoed Grey, astonished in his turn. "Why, I never knew she had a brother."

"Worse and worse!" muttered Carlton. "May I ask, Mr. Grey, where you met her first?"

"In New York," he answered.

"At the St. Nicholas Hotel?"

"No; at their own house."

"Who's house?" inquired Carlton.

"Smith's house."

"Mr. Grey," said Carlton, after a pause of deep thought, "how is it possible that she could have known Mr. Smith?"

Grey looked at Carlton as if he doubted his sanity.

"That's a queer question," he said, "when you reflect that she is his own daughter."

"Are you speaking of Miss Smith?" inquired Carlton, greatly astonished.

"I am."

"And were you under the impression that I am engaged to her?"

"Yes."

"And why?"

"Because I had it almost directly from one of the family."

"Mr. Grey," said Carlton, gravely, "there is some serious misapprehension here. I have never shown Miss Smith any attention beyond what is due from a gentleman to a lady. Indeed, I am attached to another lady."

"Then we have all been mistaken, Mr. Carlton."

"Without doubt."

"But why have you travelled with them for the last month?"

"Simply because our routes lay in the same direction."

"Do I rightly understand, Mr. Carlton, that you have never proposed to Miss Smith?"

"So far from that, I have never said one word to lead her to believe that I even liked her. And in order no longer to place any one in a false position, I shall quit Niagara this very night."

"There is no necessity for that."

"I have made up my mind, Mr. Grey."

"In that case, I will take my leave."

"And I will instantly present my parting compliments to the ladies."

And so ended the interview. Carlton immediately sent his card to the drawing-room; but the ladies were not in.

He found Smith in the office, and to him he explained that, having received a letter from an old school-mate at Detroit, inviting him to join a party going to Lake Superior, and that as they would start in a day or two, he must leave Niagara that night; and begging Smith to express his regret to his family that he could not bid them adieu, Carlton hurried away, availing himself of the invitation to do so without seeming rudeness.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

MISS Wareham falling ill caused Miss Meek to put off her trip to Italy.

Amanda had written to Minnie telling her the pleasure she experienced at the prospect of a week's holiday, which at this period of the year was granted to the scholars.

Amanda gave satisfaction to the principals; the pupils improved under her mild *régime*; and, comforted by Fairlock's friendship, she was happier than she had been since leaving her home. Still she was obliged to look to Minnie for support until her first quarter's salary was due. This troubled her; added to which was the recollection of a face which she fancied she had seen a few days before.

Entering the breakfast-room rather late one morning, Fairlock and Amanda noticed a gentleman sitting at the table alone. His dress indicated that he was a traveller, and his breakfasting at that hour that he had just arrived. As Fairlock and Amanda took their seats he rose to leave, and in passing glanced at them. He started and exclaimed,

"Miss Jed!"

"Mr. Carlton!" said Amanda, grasping her friend's arm for support, a deadly pallor overspreading her face.

"Jed!" echoed Fairlock: "what does he mean, Miss Mandaville?"

"Mandaville!" muttered Carlton, evidently not less embarrassed than Amanda; and after a short pause he confusedly inquired after her *brother*.

"Brother!" reiterated Fairlock in amazement: "you never told me that you had a brother, Amanda. Where is he? Is Mandaville only an assumed name, then?"

Amanda blushed deeply at her friend's rude curiosity. Her mortification, however, was but momentary. Drawing herself up proudly, she said with calm dignity, "The strange, but not *dishonourable* circumstances entangling me when I first met this gentleman, I may explain to you hereafter, Miss Fairlock;" and with a firm step and haughty bearing, she left the room.

A pause ensued, during which Carlton gazed upon Fairlock, who boldly sought in his features the solution of this scene.

"Dare I hope, madam," he at length inquired, "that you will be the bearer of a message to—to your friend?"

"With pleasure," she responded in her sweetest tone.

"Say to her, if you please, that I shall never cease to regret that my extreme surprise at meeting her led me to commit an indiscretion which forced her into a very painful position."

"Well, it *is* strange that I've known her so intimately, and that she never told me that she had a brother, and that Mandaville is only *an assumed* name. But I always suspected she had something on her mind—she's so very preachy at times."

"May I ask what your friend is?" he inquired.

"For the last month she has been my assistant teacher in the common school. Owing to *my* instruction, she has managed to teach infants their A B C."

There was so much vanity and arrogance in Fairlock's tone and manner when speaking of Amanda, that Carlton's lip involuntarily curled with disdain, mingling with a derisive smile. That fatal smile cost him months of misery. As he turned to go she said,—

"Surely you're not leaving town soon, for *her* sake, poor child!" And Fairlock sighed softly, casting her eyes upon the ground.

"It must be," thought Carlton, "that Amanda loves me, or this girl would not see it, as she evidently does."

Such a supposition almost overthrew his resolution to quit Toledo at once; but telling Fairlock that he intended to leave that very day, he bade her adieu.

She rang for breakfast, of which she complacently partook, while communing with herself.

"He's the first who ever treated Agnes Fairlock with aught but admiration; and yet I've never seen a man's appearance more to my taste: flashing black eyes, clustering hair, and that finely-chiselled lip curling with disdain. It shall curl with another feeling before long, if *I* know anything of the human heart. Leave town to-day, will he? No; he will linger on, if only for another glimpse of her sweet face. But who is she, and what? and why this change of name? Let me but gain her confidence, and then I will pay him back the scorn of this morning—*then* for my revenge."

After breakfast she sought Amanda in the little drawing-room, hoping at once to ascertain the secret she had determined to know.

After the unexpected meeting with Carlton, Amanda anxiously questioned herself as to the propriety of explaining all to Fairlock. Reflection convinced her that Agnes was not only incautious, but lacked the delicacy of feeling which could appreciate an embarrassing position. "No," thought Amanda; "I have not braved so much to escape that which I have never experienced, the evils of slavery and the odium of black blood, idly to proclaim myself a negress, and to a *Northern* woman. Were Carlton to implore my love, he should know all; but he cares not to ask either for my heart or my secret. If they knew me as I really am, they would spurn me; *he* even more than now. Alas! there is but one Minnie Meek; and in this world of prejudice and caste, I dare not hope that man's love can stand the test of tainted blood."

At this stage of Amanda's reflections, Fairlock entered,

and throwing her arms about her neck, in the most winning manner besought her confidence.

"Nay, Agnes, I cannot," Amanda replied, grieved that she could not reward such tenderness.

"But do, dear Mandaville. Do I not love you, and should I not suffer with you?"

"I thank you, Fairlock. Do not deem me selfish in my resolve to bear my troubles in silence and alone."

"You will not tell me, then?" inquired Fairlock softly, brushing away a few affected tears.

"Dear friend, forgive me that I pain you by my want of frankness; but I feel that I cannot."

There was something in the tone which convinced Fairlock of Amanda's determination to be silent. Striving to conceal the look of disappointment, and even anger, which flashed from her dark eyes, she threw on her bonnet, and abruptly leaving her, sought to cool her resentment in the open air. As she left the door of the hotel, she observed a man of good appearance who seemed to be waiting for some one to come forth; and as she passed he followed her.

On entering a secluded, solitary street, he quickened his pace, and approaching, addressed her.

Her first impulse was indignation at being accosted by a stranger; but without giving her time to rebuke him, he made a communication which caused her to start with a wild expression of surprise, and illuminated her features with an evil joy. In a friendly and confidential manner, the two conversed, in low, guarded tones. She listened for a long time, only interrupting him by exclamations of pleasure. When he finished, she related something which seemed to awake in him fierce exultation.

"Remember, then," she said, as they parted, "that our bed-room window looks into Small Street. It is the second from the corner. When I wave my handkerchief *once*, as if merely shaking it, you will enter the hotel, ascend the staircase facing the door, until you reach the second floor; turn to the right, and the bed-room door is before you,

numbered 20 : open it gently, and remain in the room until I come."

"I shall not forget your instructions, and shall be waiting, night and day, in the cigar-store opposite, for your signal."

"Good-by, then ; and depend on me."

With a warmth of manner surprising in such recent acquaintances, they separated.

En route to Detroit, Carlton unavoidably stopped at Chicago, and went to the only hotel of importance to breakfast, and there occurred the meeting which has been described.

At sight of Amanda, Carlton felt his passion return with redoubled force. His meditations were long and earnest.

"What strange fate," he thought, "led me to this town, to the very hotel where she lives, again to encounter her, and again to become enslaved ? I thought I had conquered my love ; but it is now awakened with renewed strength, and to find her—what ? First, the alleged sister of a gambler ; then, under another name and alone. Am I a man ? and can I not tear her from my heart ? Could I believe her worthless, I might do so ; but those innocent eyes, that angelic look, force me, in spite of appearances, to consider her truthful, womanly, and pure. Were I assured that no dishonourable tie existed between Jed and herself, I should seek to win her love and make her mine, regardless of the sneers of (it may be) wiser men, who marry in their station. I will go to her, and endeavour to learn from her own lips this mystery ; and should that lovely exterior conceal a sinful heart, my first love and disappointment shall be the last."

Acting upon this decision, he sought and found Amanda in the public drawing-room, and quite alone. On seeing him she endeavoured to leave the room ; but he detained her saying, with deep emotion,—

"Pardon my rudeness, Miss Mandaville; but I feel that on the result of this interview the happiness or misery of my life depends. Have you forgotten our parting in New York? Can you not recall my words? You fled from me then: do not refuse me a hearing now. The painful scene of this morning leads me——"

Amanda, with a haughty look, interrupted, and again sought to pass him.

"Do not misunderstand me," he continued rapidly: "I do not wish to intrude upon your secrets; but—but I came to tell you that I love you now as fervently as when first I saw you; that since our separation, I have wandered about a desolate and a hopeless man. Chance has decreed that we should meet again. If in your heart there dwells an echo of the passion rushing now through mine, do not, I implore you, refuse to listen to it. I cannot endure this uncertainty any longer. Am I hateful to you, that you treat me with this silent disdain?"

Carlton paused. Amanda lifted her eyes, so eloquent with denial of hate and filled with love, that Carlton folded her in his arms, saying, with passionate eagerness, his generous nature overcoming caution,—

"Dear Amanda, you *do* love me, and will be my wife!"

She started, blushed, freed herself from his embrace, and was silent. For a moment her countenance was illumined with joy; then, remembering the bar existing between them, she averted her face and burst into tears. Carlton sprang to her side, and sought to soothe her.

"Are you not glad that I love you? What does this mean?" he asked.

"It means," she answered almost inaudibly, "that you do not know all!"

"All? Yes; in the frenzy of love, I had forgotten your—brother, and that now I find you wandering alone under an assumed name." So saying, Carlton turned away.

"I deserve your censure: reproach me if you will; but

that this painful scene may never occur again, let me reveal that——”

“O Amanda, dear love, assure me rather that you have committed no crime, and I'll overlook all the rest. I am independent: who, then, should I please but myself? I have a mother, who might be for a moment angry that I had married a governess; but I would show her your lovely countenance, enumerate your virtues, and she could not blame my choice.”

This ardent language did not satisfy Amanda's mental inquiry, whether as a Northerner he would not scorn to mate with one who bore the least taint of black blood. “Be that as it may,” she decided, “it is but right to confide to him the obnoxious truth.”

“There is no crime upon your soul?” he asked, anxiously awaiting her reply.

“Nay, not that,” she answered, so firmly, frankly, that he felt convinced of her truthfulness. “There is no stain upon my name; but—I am——”

She strove to impart the wretched secret of her life; but her lips refused their office, and she trembled violently; a deadly pallor overspread her features, a strange pang shot through her heart, her head reeled, and she would have fallen, had not Carlton, with alarm, caught her in his arms, saying,—

“You tremble; you are pale. Tell me another time; or, to spare yourself a painful recital, write it to me.”

“Thanks, many thanks: I will do so. I must leave you now; but to-morrow expect to receive from me a letter by Miss Fairlock.”

“At two o'clock, then, I shall be here, in this room, awaiting her.”

She extended her hand, and taking it, he drew her to him, and imprinted a kiss upon her lips. Amanda hastily withdrew from the room; and on this occasion they separated both happy in the first assurance of mutual love.

That night Amanda's prayers were long and fervent. "Should Providence," she murmured, "permit me to become the wife of an honourable man, I should believe my errors expiated, my penitence rewarded."

CHAPTER XVII.

A DENOUEMENT.

RENDERED imprudent by happiness, Amanda confided to Fairlock that Carlton loved her, adding that she had promised to write to him; and putting the letter, which related all she knew of her own history, into Fairlock's hand, she said,—

"This contains a communication of great importance. I wish it to be conveyed to him by a faithful friend: you are the only one I have, and I feel assured that you will deliver it to him safely and silently."

Fairlock promised to do so, with a strange look of gratification. When the appointed hour drew near, she went to the drawing-room. Meanwhile, Amanda awaited in the utmost anxiety the result of the interview.

Fairlock found Carlton, who had been in the drawing-room some time. She smilingly tripped up to him, and placing her small hand within his, allowed it to remain there, until he, with a lover's impatience, inquired if she had brought the note.

"How rude you are!" she said with a pout, and tracing out the pattern of the carpet with her toe. She had a beautiful foot, and a guileless way of showing it. "You've not said Good morning to me, nor asked me how I am."

"I beg your pardon. I am quite remiss in conventional rules of gallantry," he replied, gently handing her to a chair. "May I ask if you have brought the note?"

"I declare, Mr. Carlton, you treat me as if I were a postman." Fairlock frowned coquettishly. "I've something

to tell you," she added in a low, sweet tone, an arch smile replacing the frown. "Will you hear it for the sake of getting the note afterwards?"

"Certainly," he said, with an air of forced resignation.

"I am aware that in this civilized nineteenth century great restrictions are placed upon our sex."

Here she drew her chair close to his, and twisted the rings on her fingers, seemingly awaiting his reply. Carlton fidgeted, thinking of a suitable one, and at length drily answered,—

"I've heard so."

"Particularly when we should be most free to speak—where our affections are engaged. I know a young, timid creature, lovely and innocent, who is attached to a gentleman. He appears to return her love; but still she lives in a state of dreadful doubt; for the innate delicacy of our sex, the reserve inculcated by nature and education, forbid a too candid declaration of her feelings."

"Poor girl!" said Carlton, thinking she alluded to Amanda.

"The dread of incurring disapprobation, the horror of unrequited——"

"Yes," he interrupted; "I know what *that* is."

Still believing that Fairlock spoke of Amanda, Carlton's face expressed the utmost sympathy and interest. Emboldened by this, Fairlock proceeded.

"Combine to put a seal upon a young girl's lips, and she too often sinks into an early grave, the victim of unrevealed affection, nurtured in silence and tears;" and burying her face in her hands, she sobbed audibly.

"I understand what you mean," said Carlton, endeavouring to calm her; "I understand, and thank you."

"You *do*?" she exclaimed, with some surprise.

"Yes; but now that you are certain that the passion on my part is as deep as you describe——"

"It *is*?" she eagerly inquired, interrupting him.

"Yes; although I felt uncertain whether my love was

really returned. This silence has annoyed me greatly : I could not comprehend it."

"Indeed ! you then are generous enough to permit our sex to speak ?"

"I don't see why a woman should not give a man any modest evidence of her affection."

"All are not so liberal. The usages of society require that we should stifle, in fact, never mention, those warm feelings which men hardly appreciate. Besides, in our own nature there is a backwardness, a reserve, a longing to be sought rather than to seek."

"True ; but it may be carried too far. When a woman sees that she is loved, she should frankly avow her mind, and not keep one in suspense. What would I not have given yesterday for the assurance that my love was returned ? But, as you say, men hardly appreciate the timidity of women ; still it is sweet to learn from your lips that I am loved so much."

"You are indeed. The object of your adoration has silently cherished, since first she saw you, a hopeless affection ; but now her happiness is too great for words ! "

"This confession overjoys me !" said he.

"Such mutual delight is hard to realize, after your protestations to another."

"Another ? Surely there is some mistake. I have never protested to another."

Fairlock's features lighted up with a wild pleasure as she thought Amanda had deceived her in saying that Carlton loved her. Having determined to exert all her fascinations and strategy to supplant Amanda, Fairlock concluded from Carlton's words that she had succeeded. A momentary reflection led her to believe that Amanda, taking advantage of a previous acquaintance with Carlton, had thrust herself upon his notice, and so prevented an earlier declaration of his love for Fairlock. This supposition increased her jealous hatred of her rival and her dangerous

charms ; and wishing to expose Amanda's (imaginary) falsehood, she said,—

“ I do not believe that your vows were given to another, but Amanda told me so.”

“ She wrongs me by such a thought. Have I not given proofs of my sincerity ? ”

“ You have, indeed ; and my happiness is unbounded.”

“ Your happiness ! ” said Carlton with surprise. “ You have a warm and sympathetic heart if you can feel so much for a friend.”

“ A friend ! that's a cold word. Are you not more than a friend—are you not a lover ? ”

“ Would I could make *her* believe how passionate a one, and how unchanging.”

“ *Her* ? Of whom are you speaking ? ”

“ Of Amanda.”

“ Amanda ! ” exclaimed Fairlock in amazement.

“ Yes ; Amanda,” replied Carlton, his astonishment increasing every moment. “ Have *you* not been talking of her all this time ? ”

“ No ; decidedly not.”

“ Who then ? ”

“ Myself, of course.”

Carlton uttered an exclamation of surprise. Then the whole mistake flashed upon him. Fairlock saw that he was endeavouring to conceal his laughter, and she reddened with mortification and anger, while her brow contracted with such a look of deadly hate as to verify the assertion that—

“ Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.”

Recovering himself, Carlton said,—

“ Did you not know, Miss Fairlock, that I look upon myself as engaged to Miss Mandaville ? ”

“ I was not aware of it,” she answered.

“ Why, then, did she send a note to me by you ? ”

“ A note ? ”

“ Yes ; a note.”

"She gave me no note."

"Indeed?"

"Indeed."

Carlton gazed doubtfully, searchingly, into her eyes. They never quailed; and in them there was such a semblance of truth, that he averted his with the air of a man on whom a heavy misfortune had fallen.

"I trust I may rely on you to keep secret the confidence so unguardedly placed in you," said Fairlock.

"Madam," he haughtily replied, "I scorn an ignoble act."

"I trust to your honour," she replied.

"Give me the note," said Carlton.

"I have no note," she answered. "Amanda is as false as you are cold. Marry her, then, in all her iniquity, that I may be gratified by the sight of your eternal misery;" and Fairlock rushed from the room, her fair face distorted by the violence of her passion and disappointment. She paused before entering the little drawing-room, in order to smooth her features and to greet Amanda calmly. Approaching her, she said sadly,—

"Prepare yourself for the worst, love."

"He read my letter then, and—but I expected and nerved myself to endure it."

"Here is your note, Amanda. I did not give it to him."

"Indeed? what must he think of me? Fairlock, you have done me a cruel injury."

"Say rather, a kindness. He offered *me* the hand already proffered to *you*. I indignantly refused him, of course, and held back your note that it might not pass into the keeping of a traitor."

"Impossible! he is no traitor."

"If you doubt my truth, I will summon him and repeat to his proud face what I tell you. Shall I, in your presence, tax him with his baseness?"

"No; I will not so insult him; and I will not believe this tale."

"Why should I deceive you? Am I not your friend?

and do I not wish to see you happy? With *him* you never could be. Let me send for him, and——”

“Stay,” interrupted Amanda, pale with excitement. “I will write to him what you say.”

“Do so, and *this* time send it to him by a waiter.”

Amanda sat down to write to Carlton, and when finished, sent it to him by a servant. Meanwhile Fairlock went into the bed-room, opened the window, and looked out. The man whom she had met in the street was waiting in the opposite shop, faithful to his word. Seeing her at the window, he stepped into the street: recognising him, she waved her handkerchief once. He raised his hat to signify that he understood the signal. Immediately after, he entered the hotel, and following the directions she had given him, found No. 20 without difficulty. The door was slowly opened to receive him. Fairlock greeted him with cordiality of manner; but putting her finger on her lips, they both preserved a dead silence. She took his hand, and on tiptoe drew him to the door communicating with the little drawing-room, where they remained listening.

When Carlton read the note given him by the servant, he inquired if Miss Mandaville were alone in her own drawing-room. Receiving a reply in the affirmative, he went there without delay, determining to refute the charge against his honour, and at the same time demand an explanation of her mysterious position.

The servant who had shown him up, entered, announced him, and immediately retired, leaving Carlton and Amanda alone.

“Miss Mandaville,” he said, endeavouring to conceal his agitation, “I feel compelled to intrude upon you thus, to ask if this note really came from you.”

“It did,” she answered in trembling tones.

“Then it contains a slander,” he said firmly; “and I desire to see the woman who dare accuse me of falsehood.”

“Behold her, then!” exclaimed Fairlock, suddenly enter-

ing, and carefully closing the door behind her. "I say that you are treacherous to Amanda."

"Were you a man, you should answer for that word. Take care, madam, lest—"

"But *you* would 'scorn an ignoble act,'" interrupted Fairlock.

"Madam, I will defend my honour, let the event be what it may. Therefore, do not goad me to do an unworthy deed, but avow yourself a false woman and a faithless friend."

"Rather let me reveal that which you will shrink to hear. Know, then, that this trembling, pallid creature, whom you have fondly clasped to your haughty breast, and humbly prayed to be the sharer of your lordly fortune and unsullied name, is a criminal."

Amanda strove to disclaim the base charge ; but Fairlock drowned her voice, shrieking, "Are you not a white-faced runaway, an escaped slave ?"

Carlton dropped Amanda's hand, which he had taken at Fairlock's entrance. This act, alone, betrayed the effect her words had upon him ; and gazing sternly upon Fairlock, he said in a constrained, but determined, voice,—

"I'll not believe this from *your* lips : you have too recently traduced me."

With eyes filled with malignant joy and undisguised revenge, Fairlock threw open the bed-room door, and *Jed* appeared.

Amanda, with a wild scream, fell senseless.

"This woman," said *Jed*, "is a white slave, who enlisted my sympathies by her tales of persecution, and persuaded me to effect her escape. To avoid detection I permitted her to pass as my sister ; but she fled from me as basely as she deceived her master."

"Now take her, proud dupe ; take her ; and may you be happy with your half-breed ;" and Fairlock, bending on Carlton an indescribable look of blended scorn, triumph, and hate, rushed away.

He tenderly lifted Amanda's prostrate form, and placing her on a sofa, said,—

“Farewell for the present, Amanda. I go to disprove this calumny.”

“You cannot disprove the truth,” said Jed. “Take leave of her for ever.”

“We shall meet again shortly, Dr. Jed,” returned Carlton. “Whether this tale be true or false, you shall dearly rue your interference in my affairs.” Saying which, he left them, and Jed and Amanda were once again alone.

He approached, and bending over her, whispered hoarsely in her ear,—

“Did I not say, that when your cup of happiness was full, I should appear to dash it from your lips? You cannot escape me: in the name of Fate I claim you. Mine you are, now and for ever.”

She heard not, heeded not; his taunts fell on a deadened ear: consciousness had fled.

It becomes here necessary to state that at Jed's trial at Boston the judge was induced to admit him to bail through the insufficiency of proof against him. Acting upon the suggestion of the butcher-attorney, Jed fled to New York; but true to his ruling passion, he went at night to the St. Nicholas Hotel, and, by dint of gold, ascertained from the porter who carried down Amanda's boxes, that they were marked “Toledo.” This was sufficient clue for Jed, whose life was made up of cunning adventure. It happened that, *en route* to Kansas (whither he was escaping), he must stop over Sunday at Chicago, which lies in the vicinity of Toledo. Wandering about the town in perfect security (for his bail had been bribed to close their eyes to his flight), Jed encountered Amanda near the village church. *His*, then, was the face which had flitted past her on that calm Sabbath. He followed her to the hotel, concealing himself from observation. He determined to accost her friend, in the hope of learning what relation she bore to *Amanda*. He found Fairlock in a mood for any vengeance

against the man she loved and the woman she hated. He easily extracted from Fairlock that Carlton was in town, and Amanda's suitor. Jed and Fairlock at once entered into a scheme to ruin her happiness, both being actuated by the basest jealousy. He informed Fairlock of Amanda's origin, which she eagerly undertook to reveal to Carlton, and to introduce Jed as a witness of its truth.

That the plan succeeded admirably, the reader already knows.

Left alone with Amanda, Jed found it impossible to arouse her from the stupor into which she had fallen. He therefore determined to abandon her to her fate, and seek his own safety. He hurried into the reading-room, where several gentlemen were engaged in reading and in conversation. Carlton had been awaiting Jed, and, approaching, touched him on the arm.

"A few words with you, alone," he said, his tone and manner full of determined courage.

Jed quailed, but followed him into the hall, and then inquired with impudent bravado,—

"What have you to say? *I've* no secrets. Speak out: is it a challenge?"

"No," replied Carlton haughtily: "I fight only with gentlemen. I demand of you the proofs of the tale you recently told me."

"Haven't you heard enough? Shall I tell you, then, that your sweetheart is not only a runaway nigger, but—"

He was not permitted to finish the sentence, for Carlton gave vent to his uncontrollable passion by striking him. Jed instantly drew a revolver, and fired. The ball, missing Carlton, hit the opposite wall. Knocking aside Jed's weapon, Carlton caught him by the throat. The report of the pistol brought several persons to the spot at the moment, when Jed, finding he was worsted, drawing a bowie-knife, was about to plunge it into the heart of his adversary. His arm was seized by a looker-on, and the combatants were separated. Jed took advantage of the general confusion to slip from the room, and left Chicago by the first train.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"A FRIEND IN NEED."

IN a darkened apartment a female form bent over Amanda's bed-side. Two physicians were consulting in whispers in another part of the room.

Who could recognise in the ghastly features, the attenuated frame, the sunken, restless eye of the patient, the once lovely and blooming Amanda ? It was she.

For three days Amanda remained unconscious and speechless ; then, in the delirium of a brain fever, raved about her home.

In fancy Fairlock's form was ever hovering at her bedside ; Jed, too, was there persuading her to leave the inn, the friendly shelter which could never be regained ; and Carlton flitted to and fro in the single ray of sunshine stealing through the closed windows of the darkened room, or he danced upon the gloomy shadows thrown on the wall by the dull, flickering fire.

Then she muttered between her clenched teeth, "Keep Fairlock away ! keep her away ! Let me die without that sweet, bad face, which once I loved, gloating over my misery ! seeking to rob me of happiness in the next world as she has done in this."

Then she would fall into a trance, and fancy herself dead and among others awaiting judgment. In vain she sought a familiar face ! No one she loved had preceded her to the land of shadows. Time had passed : eternity had come ! In the flesh she had deemed her petty sins venial ; but now, about to meet that great One, might he not deem them of

sufficient magnitude to cast her from his sight for ever? Again, it seemed to her disordered mind that she must wait, and watch, and pray for ever in maddening doubt; while the smallest conceivable lapse of time on the borders of that mysterious, unseen world, was lengthened to an eternity in itself; and thus, in the illimitable agony of a numbed brain, she was doomed to conjecture her fate, until punished beyond human realization.

Once, after a rhapsody of this nature, she imagined that she heard a gentle voice ask,—

"Will she not soon be better?"

"Who?" inquired Amanda.

"Lift her, and give her this," said a masculine voice.

"Why do you lift me?" she asked, endeavouring to recall her scattered senses. "I am strong and well. What a dark room! how silent! It is the stillness of the grave: not a footstep is heard without, hardly a whisper within. The heavy air and reverential silence warn me that death is here. Tell me, I beg, is any one dying?"

"We fear so," replied a lady, looking piteously upon her.

"Whose face is that?" Amanda inquired. "I've heard that voice before. Can this be Minnie?"

Minnie affectionately kissed the wan features of her friend, and burst into tears.

The warm drops of sympathy seemed to open the flood-gates of reason in the girl's suffering brain, and clasping her friend closer and closer, she whispered,—

"Now I know who is ill; but you must not fret for me, Minnie. I feel that it is joy to leave this world; and though worms may devour the flesh which *Carlton* once cherished, decay can never annihilate the soul."

"Do not talk so, but tell me how you feel, Amanda," said Minnie.

"I feel? why, well and strong, though dying so young and of a broken heart."

"Miss Meek," said the doctor, drawing her aside, "her reason seems returning. 'While there is life there is

hope ;' but to live she must sleep. Medicine has failed to accomplish this result. Indeed, she has been sleepless so long, that she cannot survive until to-morrow unless she sleeps *this night*. Therefore, if your own kind nature can suggest any way to soothe her into a doze, avail yourself of it at once. Another such spasm of the heart is more than she can endure. Having done all I could, I will leave her in your charge for the present, and hope that your kindness may be of more avail than any medicine which I can administer."

Minnie pondered a few moments after the doctor's departure; then gently lying down by the side of her friend, and closely pressing one hand upon the throbbing heart, endeavoured to calm the sufferer into sleep. Amanda felt her consoling presence. After a short silence, she burst into tears, saying,—

"How happy I am to die in the arms of so dear a friend, the only one I have now on earth."

"Nay," whispered Minnie; "God may will you to live; and whatever misery has befallen you, Amanda, you have *two* friends remaining; One above! the other, now holding your beating heart, and praying, oh! so fervently praying, that you may not die. Life, so precious to us all, is yet yours; therefore sleep, love, sleep."

And thus for hours, with the girl's head pillow'd on her breast, Minnie soothed and fondled her, till, like a weary child in its mother's arms, Amanda fell asleep.

On a balmy morning in blooming June, she awoke with a consciousness of returning reason. Who can describe her deep sense of thankfulness that she was still permitted to live, and her gratitude to Minnie for the simple act of kindness which saved her life?

"What day is this?" Amanda asked of Minnie, who, as usual, was sitting by her bed.

"The Lord's day." The girl moved her lips as if uttering a prayer. "Dear friend," said Minnie, "do you remember Mammie?"

"Oh yes!" she answered, smiling at this happy recollection. "Even now I recall how we used to steal into the spare room where the old clothes hung, and I knelt beside them to say my prayers."

"Have you forgotten that prayer?"

"Oh no! I can repeat it to you if you like. Many things I have forgotten since my head has been so strange, but that prayer I have always remembered. And in the long, long, sleepless nights when I've seen your form reflected on the wall, and wondered whose it was, I've recalled those Divine words, and in doing so my lost mind has flashed back to me like a gift direct from heaven. And when I've thought of all my wickedness, I've felt so happy that He should take me from this earth, ere my soul was sullied by too much sin. I've prayed for Fairlock, too, and asked forgiveness for her. And now that I know that Carlton and Jed are but vain, mocking visions of this too palpable world, and that I can renounce the one and pardon the other, I am content to die."

"But you are not going to die, Amanda: the doctor says that you will soon be well. Carlton is not a vision, as you think, but a noble, feeling man."

"How did you learn of my illness, Minnie? How did you come here?"

"When you left Toledo, Amanda, I wrote to the landlord of this hotel, requesting him to make you comfortable, and in case of any accident to summon me. You see I was very wise."

"As wise as kind, dear Minnie. And where is Fairlock?"

"She left the hotel at once, and you to your fate. But her malice did not stop there; for she informed the principals of the school of your origin; so that when I made application for the salary due to you, it was refused."

"On what ground?"

"That there is a law in this State of Illinois, prohibiting black labour. They argued that you were at least one-fourth

coloured blood ; and after submitting it to the board, it was decided that you were not entitled to receive the money."

Amanda's emotion was too great for speech ; but burying her face in the pillow, she wept. Minnie sought to lead her thoughts into another channel, and to comfort her by saying,—

" *Carlton* is still here, lingering on in the hope of seeing you. He wished to watch with me beside your bed of suffering ; but the doctor would not permit it, fearing that the sight of him might be painful, and perhaps give a fatal turn to your malady. He still refuses to believe, except from your own lips, the story which Jed told him."

" I cannot deny its truth, Minnie, and I could not bear the agony of parting with him again ; therefore I shall write and tell him that we must see each other no more."

" But, Amanda, you cannot love and treat him thus : think what a noble heart you fling away."

" I love him too deeply to wish that he should wed one whose blood and position are dissimilar to his own. Once I felt differently ; and could he have forgiven what I am, I should have forgotten all but the joy of being his wife. Our last interview made a wound in my heart which religion now is slowly healing. Do not ask me again to open it by seeing him, or it would become incurable. My resolution is taken. I will write to Carlton, and tell him all. Alas, how much misery might have been spared us both, had not Fairlock withheld that letter !"

Carlton was sitting alone in his room. He was very pale, while his compressed lips and haggard look told of intense mental suffering. He was gazing thoughtfully, sadly, upon an open letter, edged with black, which lay beside him on a table. Having written to his mother of his sojourn in Chicago, she informed him, in reply, of the death of an only uncle, and desired him to hasten to her. His gloomy meditations were interrupted by a servant, who handed him Amanda's note. He became paler than ever when he

read the confirmation of Fairlock's accusation, and that Amanda wished to see him no more. He then, in bitterness of soul, prepared for departure; and without a look or a last farewell to the being who, in obtaining his heart, had well-nigh broken it, Carlton quitted Chicago for ever.

CHAPTER XIX.

MARRYING "ON PROTEST."

"So then, Amanda, you are quite determined to return to the South," said Minnie one morning.

"I am," she answered.

"But why do you no longer dread being sold by Scotter?"

"Because, Minnie, I have reflected deeply on all the events of my life. Why did Scotter never seek to sell me until Jed made his appearance? I believe it was a scheme of his, in conjunction with the barman, to entice me away. He saw that unless some strong fear took hold of my senses, I would never desert my home."

"And do you think that Mrs. Lane would receive you again?" inquired Minnie.

"Yes, Minnie. Did she not adopt me—rear me as her daughter? and when I anticipated being sold by Scotter, she offered to buy and give me freedom. Would not such a woman gladly welcome back 'a sinner that repenteth'? I will risk it at all hazards; for I am weary of the boasted philanthropy of the North for the negro: it is sheer hypocrisy."

"Not all, I hope, Amanda."

"No, not all, Minnie; and for your sake I were indeed ungrateful could I not forgive the entire North. You are a glorious exception to the general rule."

"You are, then, quite determined to return to Georgia?"

"Quite; and as speedily as possible, Minnie."

"Then I must read you something which has just

appeared in the 'personal column' of the *New York Herald*. I think it relates to you. I had not intended to show it to you, fearing that it was some specious manner of entrapping you into slavery—you see I have my prejudices—but as you are bent on returning, you may as well hear it." Minnie then read as follows:—

"Should this meet the eye of A—m—a S——, who suddenly left her home in Georgia, about three months since, she is earnestly requested to return, or to communicate with Wm. Sandbrook, 6, Hall's Place, New York, as something of the utmost importance has transpired during her absence."

Amanda gazed long upon the advertisement. "Yes—yes," she said; "I am certainly the person referred to; and I will instantly return to solve the mystery."

"But as you seem so unfortunate when left to yourself, Amanda, it is highly desirable that you should have a protector, to keep off your enemies. There are always Southern families visiting Niagara during the summer; and as I often stop at the Clifton House, I know the landlord, and will write and ask him if there is any one at his house who would take charge of a young lady going South."

"Thanks, Minnie; many thanks."

Minnie opened her writing-desk, and began the letter, to which, in a few days, she received the following reply:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"I am only too happy to do anything in my power to forward any wish of so kind and distinguished a lady as yourself. On the receipt of your letter, I took it to Mrs. Smith, who is going South shortly; and she begged me to say, that she will be happy to take charge of your young friend. That you may feel perfect confidence in intrusting her to the protection of Mrs. Smith, I must inform you that the Smith family are highly respectable and wealthy residents of New York. They have two

Fox fell at once into a meditative mood, which kept him silent during the remainder of the visit.

"Your wedding created quite a sensation, Mrs. Grey," remarked Caroline. "I heard of it in Chicago, where I have just finished lecturing. Did you marry on protest?"

Angy looked confused, and replied, ashamed of her ignorance,—

"I did not. In fact, I do not quite know what it means."

"Oh! then I must instruct you;" and with an ominous glance at Fox, Caroline drew from the back pocket of her coat a large sheet of paper, saying, "Here is the original document. I drew it up myself, and had it published too; so everybody knows it. I always carry it with me." And rising, as if about to address an audience, Caroline read as follows:—

"This is to certify, that I, Caroline Cleverbawl, single, by profession a Woman's Rights Lecturer, of Auburn, New York, do solemnly pledge myself to consider myself the wife of Aminadab Fox, single, of Sassafras Town, Vermont, of no occupation and no means, on the following conditions:—

"*Firstly*: That he is in no way to interfere with my mission of advocate of woman's rights.

"*Secondly*: That after receiving from me such weekly stipend as I may deem sufficient for his support, he shall not question me as to the disposition of the money received by me in my above-mentioned capacity.

"*Thirdly*: That I am to retain my maiden name.

"*Fourthly*: That he is to retain his.

"*Fifthly*: That he is to keep in repair pants, coats, boots, hats, socks, and all other articles of masculine apparel.

"*Sixthly*: That in case of incompetency, he is not to require or solicit my aid.

"*Seventhly*: That after signing this paper, we are to be looked upon as man and wife, without further ceremony.

"*Eighthly*: That should he violate any of the above conditions, the marriage shall be null and void.

"(Signed) { CAROLINE CLEVERBAWL.
AMINADAB Fox."

With a look of satisfaction Caroline folded up the paper and put it in her pocket. As she did so there was a knock at the door, and Amanda entered.

"Miss Jed!" exclaimed Caroline.

"Allow me," said Angy: "this is Miss Mandaville, a friend of Miss Meek, the poetess."

"I guess I know more about this young coloured person than you do," answered Caroline, with a contemptuous glance at Amanda.

"Coloured person!" echoed the Smith ladies.

"Who told you," said Caroline, advancing to Amanda, "that a *Boston* boy would marry a fugitive? No, no. Just tell those people down South that we don't like their slaves quite well enough yet to marry them."

"Believe me, Mrs. Smith," said Amanda, with forced composure, to that injured lady rocking backwards and forwards in a chair the better to express her indignation, "did I not consider myself in a manner your guest, and therefore an explanation due to you, I should treat Miss Cleverbawl's insolence with silent scorn."

"That's all very fine," retorted Caroline; "but can you deny that you ran away from Georgia with a fellow named Jed?"

Amanda was silent. Caroline continued, "And you tried to entrap young Carlton into marrying you by concealing from him what you are. I heard the whole story in Chicago; and I know, too, how you have deceived and infatuated that silly old maid Meek."

Amanda, weak still in health and broken in spirit, at these cruel words sank speechless into a chair; and as the misery of her position and the thought that she had brought

it on herself, came to her mind, she covered her face and burst into bitter, uncontrollable tears.

One heart was moved at the sight of her grief. Susan advanced, and taking her hand, said kindly, "Don't give way so. We have not yet heard *your* story."

"I can say little in my defence," answered Amanda. "Maddened by a most ingenious artifice—for Jed cunningly fixed my belief that I was to be sold—I abandoned my home, my mistress, my country, all that I held dear, to follow a false light, a delusive unreality, which will mislead many another weak wayfarer!"

"You hear, Mrs. Smith," said the pitiless advocate of woman's rights, "she confesses it. If I had known what sort of people you received, I should not have visited you."

"Susan, come here, right away," replied Mrs. Smith in an alarmed tone: "you know we don't take up with *that* sort."

"I shall intrude no longer," said Amanda, going.

"Of course, Miss—Miss," interposed Angy—"you understand, Rev. Caroline, that Miss Meek introduced this young la—coloured girl, and wished us to take her to Georgia; but she will see, I hope, that I, having been married so recently—that I should hardly—that is, *Mr. Grey* would not desire that our—*his* bridal party, should be contaminated—that is, made up—or composed of—persons of colour."

"Why not say plainly that you decline to take her to Georgia?" asked Caroline.

"Not exactly decline," answered Angy; "but you know Mr. Grey is so very particular. Only knowing Miss Meek by reputation, we are, of course, under no obligations; and—"

Unable to bear another word, Amanda rushed from the room. As the door closed on her, Susan said angrily, "I don't know what that girl's errors may be, and I don't attempt to excuse them; but I do know, ma, that if I had a home and a husband of my own, as Angy has, she should not have been treated so under *my* roof."

"I hope you don't attempt to rebuke *me*," said Angy loftily, "nor *my* friends."

"Certainly not; I simply think that it would have been more kind, to say nothing of delicacy, had this rev. lady privately told us her history, and not have wounded her feelings in that public way. An Irish help would not have taken what she did."

"I declare, Miss Smith!" responded Caroline, vexed—"at my time of life to be taken to task by a girl!"

"At your time of life," answered Susan, who always yielded to her impulses, and now did not check her anger, "you ought to know better than to insult other people in other people's apartments. They that live in glass houses should never throw stones."

"What do you mean by that, miss?" demanded Caroline, very red and angry.

"That that protest of yours is all rubbish, and you're no more married than I am!"

"Fox!" cried Caroline—"poor-spirited dolt—can't you say a word to defend your own wife? Come, let us go home; and when you're dead, and in your grave, I'll take care never to marry one of *your* sex again, on protest or otherwise."

As they made their exit, Angy fell back on the sofa apparently fainting, where Susan left her to be restored by her mother. Let the scene close upon them.

Amanda remained undisturbed in her room for an hour, at which time a servant came and delivered a note. It ran thus:—

"Room 20, CLIFTON HOUSE.

"MADAM,

"Being a stranger to you, I should first apologise for the liberty I take in addressing you; but I conjecture that the state of your mind at present is such, that you would prefer to set aside conventionalities, and to know at once the object of my letter. Detained by a slight illness in my room, which adjoins the parlour of Mrs.

Smith, I was an unwilling listener to the reproaches cast upon you by one of your own sex.

"I am a Southerner, and I leave for Georgia to-morrow. I live in Macon; and should you not fear to trust yourself to my protection, I will take you to Augusta. With me you will at least be free from insult.

"The landlord knows who I am, and will no doubt convince you of my respectability. Submit this letter to him. I trust to receive an immediate answer. Never having seen you, I can have no interest in this proposition, beyond an earnest wish to aid and protect a defenceless woman.

"Truly yours,

"WILLIAM J. RANDOLPH."

Amanda read the note with surprise and pleasure; then summoning the proprietor of the hotel, she placed it in his hands.

"The gentleman who writes to you," he said, after perusing it, "is a distinguished man of bravery and honour. You may go with him without fear. In parting, I can only express my regret that your short stay in my house has been so unpleasant. The train leaves to-morrow at five a.m.; and as it is now getting late, you had better take all the rest you can. I will say Good night to you."

He left Amanda, who sat down to write to Randolph. Her words were few.

"SIR,

"When the heart is well-nigh broken, and the belief in human kindness and pity nearly destroyed, an act such as yours calls back the vanishing faith and comforts the desponding soul. I place myself in your hands. That I should be led back to my home by a Southerner, is a fit ending to the little drama in which I have played so unsatisfactory a part."

CHAPTER XX.

A NEGRO BALL.

"BUT you must go."

"Impossible! I've no taste for such sports."

"But you must: you will see there the prettiest quadroon that ever danced at a darkey's ball."

The speakers were two clerks living in Augusta.

"Who is she, and what?" inquired the first, named Clements.

"I don't know her name: my success with her goes no further than nods and smiles. I think she's one of Squire's household servants. You know Squire. Scotter is his overseer."

After a few more words, the friend consented to accompany Clements. They soon reached a large building in the suburbs of the town. A number of lights, and the sound of music, indicated which was the ball-room.

"The dancing's begun," said Clements. "If we don't make haste, I shall not be able to dance with her; she will have so many partners."

They ascended the staircase; and Clements, darting into the room, singled out of the crowd a tall, handsome quadroon, and led her into the dance.

There was a strange mixture of colour in that lively throng. Interspersed with those of sable hue, were groups of white men, half disguised in slovenly, coarse attire, with hats drawn over their brows, a few of them now and then dancing with some favourite, while the children of Africa whirled, jumped, and hopped with a fleetness and vigour impossible to less hard-working classes.

Clements danced again and again with the girl he came to see. His friend, tiring of the scene, was about to leave, when his attention was arrested by loud, angry voices, threats, and oaths. Turning, he beheld the girl surrounded by men. One whose face was white with rage grasped her fiercely by the arms, while she shrieked with pain and fear. It was Scotter. Clements, equally enraged, advanced towards him, ordering him to release her.

"You're a fule," shouted Scotter in reply. "The gal's mine; and she sneaked up here to dance with you, did she? I'll l'arn her better." He dealt her a heavy blow. Stunned, she reeled, and Clements caught her.

"Let her go, cub! I'll have no dancing with *my* gals;" and Scotter rushed upon Clements to seize the insensible slave.

"If you touch her, your life shall pay for it," cried Clements. Not heeding these words, Scotter struck her again, and she awakened from the stupor of one blow to scream with agony at another. This was beyond Clements' endurance. He took the girl by the waist, and drawing a revolver to guard his way, endeavoured to bear her out of the room.

"That's your game, is it?" cried Scotter, foaming with fury. "Two can play at that." In a moment both pistols were discharged. The ball intended for Clements entered the girl's heart, killing her in his arms.

Scotter turned to escape, but receiving a wound in his back, fell with a deep groan. As the girl's last shriek rent the air, the affrighted slaves fled from every door, and the confusion became general. Some, however, sent policemen to the scene of the brawl. A stretcher was brought, and Scotter, being seriously wounded, was allowed to be taken to his own house, attended by a policeman.

Clements was conveyed to prison, there to await either the recovery or the death of Scotter. Anticipating the worst, he bribed the jailor's wife to aid him to escape. She

procured him a disguise; and by staining his face and dyeing his hair, he managed to fly to England.

In a distant, lonely lane, in a valley, stood Scotter's house. The windows were open, and lights were burning within. All was disordered and decaying: no woman's love was there to save the habitation from neglect and desolation. And here, in this solitary building—solitary, though surrounded by negroes' huts—Amanda's earliest days had passed, listening to the musical but sad murmurs of the pine trees, while awaiting in fear the return of that harsh man whose cruelty had blighted her childhood.

The bullet, which had lodged in the lower part of Scotter's back too deep to be extracted, produced paralysis of the lower extremities, excluding all hope of recovery, though he lingered long.

Even the most depraved become contrite at the approach of death. When Scotter learned that he could survive but a short time, he was seized with remorse and fear of future punishment. It was not the murder of the slave which disturbed him—as that, he declared, was not intentional—but the cruel hate and malignity he had so persistently exercised towards the friendless child whom circumstances had placed in his power. Delirium was fast approaching. Seeing which, the policeman urged him to reveal all that he might have upon his conscience, and to make his peace with God.

Night had fallen. The once strong, healthy man lay in a partial slumber. The dark, sunken eye, emaciated cheeks, pointed nose, and difficult breathing, indicated the near approach of death. He started, muttering a wish to see Mrs. Lane quickly, or it would be too late.

The policeman immediately dispatched a messenger to that excellent lady, who lost no time in obeying the summons. As she entered, the policeman left the room.

"Mrs. Lane," breathed Scotter, "my time is short. What has become of the gal you took and raised?"

"I do not know. She ran away, fearing that you would sell her. I have never heard of her since, and I fear evil has befallen her."

"It aint my fault if it hasn't," said Scotter feebly, with a remorseful groan. "Mrs. Lane, I've been a bad man all my life. It was all known up there long 'go, and it's no use to conceal it now from man. Mandy warnt no nigger, though I told you she was when you kep' her at the inn."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Lane. "What reason had you?"

"The property. Mandy's mother was my brother's wife. She died at the gal's birth, and jus' b^rore I come to Augusta. My brother died too, leaving me the keer of the child. She was a weakly thing, and my brother thought she wouldn't live long, so he willed the property to come to me *after her death*. The money warnt much, but enough to tempt me. I hated the whining critter, who wouldn't die so that I might get it; and I formed a plan to make out that she was black, hoping that she would get so mis'able before she growed up that she'd destroy herself, and then I'd get the money."

Mrs. Lane shuddered, and felt that in interposing between this man and his victim, she had been an humble instrument in the hands of a higher Power.

"But it war to be that I should die fust," he continued, his voice getting fainter. "In that old box in the corner you will find all the papers: my brother's will, her mother's marriage certificate, and another about baptizin' Mandy. Folks tried to make out that she was *my* child; but she war not. I allers intended to clare up the matter afore I died; but I hated to part with the money. If you ever come across her, jus' say that I died awful——"

The words, with great difficulty articulated, were interrupted by a convulsive heaving, the sure harbinger of dissolution. A cold perspiration stood upon the ghastly face; there was a rattling noise in the throat, a spasmodic grasp

of the hand, accompanied by a falling of the jaw, and Scotter was dead.

On reaching Augusta, Amanda bade adieu to her travelling companion, and taking lodgings near the little inn, remained in them during the day. When darkness came, she wandered forth towards the lane leading to the court-yard; the same quiet lane through which she had fled in making her escape. Nerving herself for the effort, she timorously approached the gate which opened into the court-yard, and lightly crossed the Green Pond, recalling, on the bridge, the feelings which agitated her when, as a little desolate child, she had lain there, gazing upon the watery reflection of her features.

Checking the sigh which this remembrance caused, she turned towards the house. There was a solemnity in the quietude hanging over the familiar objects surrounding the once busy inn. Not a footstep was heard, not a negro visible. She asked herself the reason of the change, and her heavy heart beat the response that her benefactress was no more. Striving to cast off the gloomy fear that death had visited the homestead during her unhappy absence, she glided to the open kitchen door, and glanced within.

A female sat on a stool before the fire, apparently dozing. Her back was turned, but Amanda could not mistake that well-known form. Stealing in on tiptoe, she knelt by the side of Mammie, and looked into her face.

The rustling of her dress awakened the negress, who dreamily beheld Amanda. Starting up with fear and trembling, she screamed loudly,—

“ Massy, oh, massy ! it’s a ghost !”

“ Hush, Mammie dear—hush !”

“ It’s a ghost, a ghost ! Miss Bella, come yah !”

Notwithstanding Amanda’s entreaties to be silent, Mammie was really frightened, and continued to scream. The other servants came running in, alarmed, and seeing Amanda, caught the infection, and joined in a lusty chorus of—

"A ghost! a ghost!"

Mrs. Lane, hearing the noise, ran to the kitchen to inquire the cause of confusion, and seeing Amanda, doubted the evidence of her senses. Amanda fell on her knees, suing for forgiveness.

Mrs. Lane quickly raised her to her heart, forgetting the girl's ingratitude in the joy of her return.

When the emotions caused by this interview had subsided, Mrs. Lane informed her that Scotter had been dead a month, and that, owing to his dying revelation, she had caused the advertisement to be inserted in the New York journal.

She further added that Mr. Lane had given up the inn in consequence of failing health; that all the servants, with the exception of Mammie, were to be hired by the new proprietor; and that the family were going to remove to New Orleans.

Amanda's joy was too deep to regret that she had not known of Scotter's death in time to be happy with Carlton.

That night she was conducted to the familiar spare room. Kneeling, as of yore, she put her small white hand in Mam-mie's, and together they offered up a prayer of praise and thankfulness to that all-merciful Power who had permitted her to return in safety to her first and only home.

CHAPTER XXI.

MANASSAS.

YEARS passed.

America—fair, blooming America—no longer heard—

“ Peace tinkling on the shepherds’ bells,
And singing with the reapers.”

A cruel, unnatural war raged throughout the land where plenty once reigned supreme. Men forsook their occupations and their dearest ties. The farmer threw aside his scythe, and the shopman his measure, to take up the sword, and carry destruction and death into the homestead of his brother.

Among those foremost to enter his name as a volunteer in a Massachusetts regiment, was Carlton; and he was given a lieutenancy. Fired with fanatical zeal, he entered at once into service.

The skirmish at Bull’s Run had taken place, and the Federal army was awaiting the eventful battle of Manassas, which occurred on the morrow.

What is more picturesque than a camp at night? the red glare of fire-light throwing on the ground dark shadows of multitudinous white tents; soldiers sleeping, here and there, with glistening arms beside them; others, more active, engaged in various preparations for the coming strife; all confident of victory, and happily unconscious of their own fate.

Woman rarely enters such a scene as this, except as a *vivandière*. The soldiers little heeded that a female form stood by Carlton’s side, before a large camp fire. This

woman, originally introduced to the reader as a teacher in a school in Chicago, soon after the scene with Amanda and Carlton, abandoned her occupation, and sought the dissolute capital of Washington, where she was more likely to encounter him than in the West. As anticipated, she had met him again, and induced him to pardon the cruel part she had acted towards Amanda.

Fairlock, like many others, on the eve of the battle of Manassas believed that the forthcoming day would result in the signal victory of the Federal arms; and that she might witness and gloat over it, as well as be near Carlton, she had taken up her residence for the time in the neighbouring village.

She was dressed in a dark-coloured, flowing riding-habit, which revealed the full proportions of a queenly figure. A large black hat, with a broad brim, fringed with a feather, partly drooped over and shaded her face. As the flickering light flitted over and gave pallor to her features, it could be seen that, though still young, she was slightly haggard, as if remorse had left its fatal imprint on her lovely visage.

The fire disclosed the primitive grace and manliness of Carlton's noble form enhanced by a martial dress. *His* features too had changed: the roundness of early youth had deepened into firm lines; the former half-mocking, half-merry lip had now an habitual superciliousness, as if he had tried, and disdained, the world. The generous, uncontrolled impulsiveness of boyhood had been crushed by self-command. An outward composure was the result of mastering and concealing his feelings. His bearing, stern and soldierlike, gave him great power over others. There was but *one* now to whom he spoke without reserve, and *she* was not his ideal of womanhood, nor the being he had loved. Still he turned to her with something of the tenderness which, long ago, had awakened joy in a gentler and purer soul than Fairlock's.

"You are cold," he said. "It is almost morning, and even as we stand we may be surprised by the enemy—if that

could be called a surprise for which we are prepared. Return to the village."

"I cannot leave you, Carlton. It may be only a womanish fear, but on the eve of this great battle, which will surely crush this rebellion, I tremble, and a sadness takes possession of my soul. I am not weak nor superstitious, yet I have a shadowy, undefined dread that this night will be the last which we shall ever pass together."

"Fairlock, there are moments when such feelings enter even men's hearts. Still it may be only a fancy induced by the solemnity of an approaching conflict. With the coming day, and in the tumult of action, I shall forget it. Should it be my lot to render up my life in the service of my country, you will find me on the field with my face to the hated foe."

Fairlock brushed away her gathering tears, and said,—

"Carlton, I am not what I once hoped to be—your wife; but you are worthy the love of a far nobler woman. Yet, indirectly, you have made me what I am; for had I never seen you—never become maddened by jealousy—and had not remorse for *that* deed rendered me reckless of self, I might still have remained an obscure, but sinless village teacher."

"And have I suffered nothing, Fairlock? for had you not withheld that letter, and led me to believe that Amanda designedly deceived me, I should have married her, and in some clime where her origin was unknown, have found the happiness which then I dreamed could not fail to be mine. By birth, education, and fortune, I thought myself destined to a life of pleasure and of peace. These visions were dispelled by the accidental circumstance of meeting *you*."

Carlton spoke bitterly. Fairlock seized his hand passionately, exclaiming,—

"Yet say once more that you forgive me, Carlton. Let me hear it again; though I never can forgive myself."

As remorseful recollections agitated her, Fairlock's face assumed a wild expression, her frame shook, and a low cry issued from her pale, parted lips.

"Calm yourself, Fairlock," said Carlton: "I have long ago forgiven you. Could I withhold absolution, believing in your penitence? Is it for presumptuous, erring man to say, I will not forgive? Take this ring; it may be a last token of regard; and when you press it to your lips, reflect that in presenting it, I recalled the many proofs which you have given of deep and lasting repentance."

Fairlock took the ring, convulsively kissed it, and turned away in the cold grey of the morning. A silent, soul-felt adieu was theirs, and their parting was for ever.

A renowned writer has left an imperishable description of the battle of Manassas. He relates that hundreds who came to exult in the defeat of the Confederates, fled in wild confusion for their lives, pressed forward and trampled on by a mass of disordered, panic-stricken, retreating soldiery; and so complete was the rout of the Unionists, that thousands of Federal wounded were left to the mercy of the Confederates.

So sudden and unexpected had been the commencement of this melancholy and disastrous civil war, that the Confederates had been unable to obtain a sufficiency of surgical instruments; for these, and all medicines, had been pronounced contraband by the weak-minded ruler of the Northern States. In the immediate necessity for amputation, limbs were taken off with a common hand-saw. Among the many on both sides who perished from sheer, but unavoidable neglect, was Carlton. He fell, desperately wounded. Consumed by fever, beneath a parching sun, his sufferings augmented by the consciousness of approaching madness, Carlton yielded up his life, in the very flower of manhood, a victim to an unnecessary and inhuman war.

After the battle Fairlock awaited Carlton, who came not. Filled with solicitude and fear, she sought him on the field. Pools of coagulating blood, maimed and ghastly dead heaped up ready to be thrown into ditches not deep enough to

hold them, on all sides met her view. Horror-stricken, she watched the bodies as they were tossed or shovelled into the gaping ground. At length she recognised the ghastly, death-distorted face of Carlton, and with one wild shriek of agony she fled far, far from the hideous scene.

The earth was but loosely thrown over his body, and for months it lay among others, exposed to light and heat, festering in the summer sun.

And thus, after the bloody battle of Manassas, all that remained of the brave and gifted Carlton, the embodiment of feeling and of honour, was a mass of loathsome clay!

CHAPTER XXII.

GENERAL FELUN IN NEW ORLEANS.

ON leaving Georgia, Mrs. Lane went to New Orleans, which was her husband's birth-place. He shortly afterwards died, leaving Mrs. Lane and Amanda living in one of the finest residences in the town. Amanda, separated from Carlton, and happy that no stigma attached to her, gradually felt the intensity of her passion for him subsiae. Time softens sorrow and revivifies pleasure; and Amanda learned to look upon her love for Carlton as a brief, joyous dream, which she dreamed in the first rosy sleep of youth, never to be renewed. She did not even regret, for she believed that—

“ ‘Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.”

And thus her peaceful life glided on.

Before the civil war began, New Orleans was, next to New York, the gayest and most fashionable city in the then United States.

Originally settled by the French, the French population still equalled the American. During the healthy, or winter season, all the amusements peculiar to the lively Gallic nation held sway: French theatres, masked balls, carnivals, and operas. The weather, usually warm and sunny, permitted the fair sex to wear the gaudiest colours, and to drive in open carriages. The city was always filled with wealthy planters, whose wives and daughters spared nothing for dress or pleasure. There were no cellars to the houses,

which are built on piles. Even the tombs are above ground ; for they cannot dig deep without coming to water. Indeed, the city was in danger of being overflowed (as it lay below the level of the Mississippi), until an embankment was raised, called the Wharf, or Levée.

As the incidents of the present civil war in America are well known to the reader, it is only necessary to state that the Federals took possession of the town.

And now all changed. Where once the fair women of New Orleans thronged and enlivened the streets, the upstart Union officers boldly paraded, with negresses on their arms. And the infamous proclamation of General Felun in regard to the Southern women caused them to shut themselves in their houses, or, if forced to stir abroad, to go with daggers at their side ; for such licence was given to the invaders that no lady was safe : the very look of disdain which she threw on the hated Federal was sufficient to subject her to imprisonment. Men were arrested on no charge whatever, and sent to jail manacled like felons. Women and children were turned into the streets, and their houses, even their clothing, taken from them, and distributed among the negroes, who were incited to plunder, to insolence, and to all the savageness of which the black race is capable. Clergymen were dragged from the pulpit and taken to prison because they had omitted praying for the ruler of the North, and the congregation driven from the church by force of arms. The planters were robbed of the products of their plantations, and the property of the conquered people confiscated by a tyrant whom they despised. But the petty despot of an hour could not subdue the brave hearts of the Southern women, though he planted spies in all their houses. Still they resolutely defied him, and refused to be at peace with his villainous myrmidons, many of whom were convicts of Northern prisons, let loose on condition of joining the Northern army.

When friends met, they conversed in whispers, knowing themselves surrounded by informers, generally low creatures

who gratified a grudge against a subjugated people. Free speech and a free press were no longer known; everything was formed after a despotic model; famine stared them in the face; and wanton cruelty, plunder, and licentiousness were the order of the day.

Such protection as the wolf gives the lamb, General Felun gave the inhabitants of New Orleans. Better had the town been razed to the ground than surrendered to him!

This was the same butcher-attorney who had been the vile instrument to open the prison doors to the forger Jed; shortly after which the attorney became a petty politician, and by cunning and duplicity advanced, step by step, to a position easy to attain in the United States when the adventurer is bold and profligate. It is even said that he was instrumental in placing in the seat of government the unfortunate man whose misdirected imbecility has brought destruction on that once prosperous and happy country. For this service the attorney was given a position which enabled him to indulge in all the ferocity he had inherited and heightened at the shambles. Behold him now, ruling with fire and sword a subdued city, filled with the old, women, invalids, and negroes. For the young men had joined the Confederate army, leaving New Orleans almost defenceless.

Among the first to declare herself against the oppressor, was Mrs. Lane. Added to her galling and unconcealed defiance, was the fact that she was rich; and Felun, who loved money as a newly-experienced pleasure, felt his cupidity as well as indignation aroused, and he determined that he would, at least, humble the pride of two women who dared shut their doors on his minions; for no Federal ever crossed Mrs. Lane's threshold except with a warrant in his hand. On the plea that their house was necessary to the Government, he sent an officer, in whose cruelty and dishonesty he had perfect confidence, to make "a raid on the family spoons." This Captain Julius knew well his

duties, for he had formerly committed a certain crime, to escape the consequences of which he, with Felun's aid, fled to the far West. There he remained, sinking lower in depravity, until the war broke out, and Felun, his old friend, became the despot of New Orleans. Well knowing that all criminals were pardoned if they would enter the army, he accompanied Felun to the fair metropolis of Louisiana.

Gloating over a new opportunity to inflict evil on the harmless and defenceless, Captain Julius hastened with a guard of men to Mrs. Lane's house. He entered, breaking and destroying her household gods in the name of a free government.

"Dastard!" she cried, "had I but a small band of armed men, I would defend my mansion to the last."

A sneer played over his dark features as he replied,—

"Take care, madam: you speak treason; and were it not for old friendship's sake, I would at once report you to the General."

"Old friends! I scorn your friendship, and I thank Heaven that I have never seen you until this moment."

"You have forgotten me, but we *have* met before."

She turned in speechless indignation, and retreated to the little boudoir where Amanda sat trembling. Julius followed Mrs. Lane. As he entered, Amanda rose, and stood face to face with—Jed!

"At last! at last, I have found you!" he cried in wild joy, his voice almost rising to a scream. "None now can come between me and the prize I have struggled for for years. Carlton cannot rise from his grave to wrest you from my grasp. Amanda, mine you are, now and for ever!" and pressing his base lips passionately to hers, he seized her by the waist and bore her off, heedless of Mrs. Lane's shrieks.

"To the head-quarters of the General!" he shouted to his men. "I have arrested a female traitor."

"Off with her!" they cried in concert.

"Off with her to Felun!"

"We'll teach her!"

"He will make an example of her!"

Amid such cries as these, and the jeers of an increasing crowd of ruffians, Amanda was dragged along, until she reached the private residence of Felun. The people never penetrated into the interior, for Felun feared a mob. Jed marshalled Amanda through the corridors, through files of soldiery, until he reached the room where the petty but dreaded tyrant sat in state, at a table covered with papers, and was perhaps engaged in some of those local literary compositions which have added to his notoriety. Around the room were placards, stating that "The she-adder is as dangerous as the he-adder." On Jed's entrance with a woman, he lifted his right eye: the other remained immovable and hideously twisted. The once lean attorney, fattening on power, had grown corpulent. The lower part of the round, sensual face was closely shaved, leaving the skin blue, as if the beard had been blasted off.

A coarse mustache still drooped over the cruel mouth and projecting teeth. He was now bald, and his head was the only thing in his entire person which bore evidence of polish.

"Ah!" he ejaculated in a harsh and petulant voice. His bed in New Orleans had not been altogether of roses; for, living in constant fear of assassination, he always wore a suit of armour under his uniform. He nodded his head with cunning satisfaction, saying,—

"A female traitor, I suppose."

"Yes, General; one of the worst description. I arrested her on the proclamation. She insulted me in the street—looked scornfully, as if she hated an officer of the Union."

"Indeed!" replied Felun, firing up. "I will make an example of her. I'll teach these incendiary women not to turn up their not very pretty noses at my soldiers!"

"Pardon me," said Amanda, "I was not even aware of his presence until—" In her agitation Amanda

advanced hastily towards Felun. He immediately sprang up, crying,—

“Do you mean to stab me, viper?”

She strove to explain that such could not have been her intention, as she had no weapon.

“Reptile!” said Felun, losing command of himself. “Take her to prison, Captain: here is the order”—hurriedly writing it. “I’ll make an example of her. I’ll show these Southern fire-brands—the red-hot traitors—these she-devils. Off with her!”

“Amanda,” said Jed, as he hastened her into an adjoining room, gloating over his easy triumph, “have you forgotten that long ago I told you that your destiny and mine were irrevocably intertwined? And when in New York your ingratitude turned to hate the only one pure and unselfish love I had ever known, I made an oath that you should never escape me. When about to bestow on Carlton the heart which should have been mine, did I not, as I had said, dash the cup of joy from your lips? He now is dead, I know, and cannot rise from his grave to come between us. You, perhaps, forgetting him, are seeking happiness with another. Again I will prevent it. No rebel aid can save you now.”

Two soldiers followed Amanda out of the General’s headquarters, while Jed walked by her side. They soon came to the suburbs of the town. Night was advancing. The air, soft and balmy, seemed impregnated with dew. The moon, at times obscured by clouds, at times shone forth in fitful splendour. The roads were heavy with recent rain, and the way long and dreary. At length they stopped at a deserted mansion used as a temporary prison, on the banks of the Mississippi. Entering the house, Jed bade the guard return to the city. They obeyed, leaving them alone. Amanda uttered a silent prayer that the same merciful Providence which had so often shielded her from ruin, would not forsake her in her hour of greatest danger. She

had need of all her reliance on an over-ruling Power, and of all her nerve.

Jed looked at her with bloodshot eyes ; for he had been drinking deeply, by the way, from a flask which he carried in his pocket.

There was scarcely any furniture in one part of the habitation, which was a rendezvous for soldiers. Broken bottles, glasses, cards, and military equipments, were scattered about, telling of some recent scene of dissipation ; but a solemn quietude now reigned instead of the former riot and uproar. Amanda shuddered. So far from the town, so solitary, nought would answer a shriek of distress !

Jed, taking his flask again from his pocket, put it to his lips and hurriedly emptied it. Amanda saw that his intoxication must increase. Her fears were speedily realized ; for, with growing excitement and quickened gait, he approached and clasped her in his arms. She struggled and screamed.

“ It’s of no use, girl ! ” he said, with a leer of satisfaction. “ *My* triumph’s come now. Scream to the winds if you will, but first—— ”

Amanda, alive to her danger, sprang to the unlocked door. Disconcerted for a moment by the unexpected action, as she sought to fly he seized her by the dress. The light fabric gave way ; and losing his equilibrium, he fell backwards.

“ Vile coward ! ” she cried, “ I am not conquered yet ! You may inflict tyranny on the women of the South, but the men of my country will speedily avenge the outrage ! ” and opening the door as he rose again, she bounded out into the night, Jed following close upon her. On, on they went, the girl and her pursuer. The shaded moon refused to light her way ; still on in the darkness she ran, up a paved hillock. On, on came Jed, his heavy footsteps nearer and nearer !

With courage augmenting with the prospect of escape, forward she rushed, not knowing whither, and falling over

the steep embankment, disappeared in the swift waters of the Mississippi.

Her wild shriek made Jed pause on the Levée ; and then, as if to show him the darkness of his deed, the clouds rifted, and a girlish, moon-silvered form drifted from his view.

Oh, *Amanda!* hadst thou never committed that first concealment, and that rash, needless flight from thy home, thou wouldst not have perished thus, through fear of dis-honour, in the great “father of waters.” Pure but pitiable victim of thy own fears and weakness, hadst thou never fled with Jed thou wouldst not now be drifting into eternity on the broad bosom of that relentless river.

Float, float on ! while the affrighted night birds shriek a sullen and discordant requiem over thy unknown and youthful grave. In the vain struggle with death draw thy liquid winding-sheet about thee as a garment of glory, while the moon comes forth in unclouded lustre, and around thy fair and sinless head weaves a martyr’s crown !

THE END.

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